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PART 1

## The Teacher of Religion and the Present Hour\*

ALBERT W. PALMER

THIS IS NOT a promising hour for religion. Values and motives quite contrary to the traditional emphasis of Christianity are in the saddle. Thousands of young men are being told "You're in the army now", and in the civil life the emphasis in radio, press, and movies is not only on war, but often on suspicion, hatred and revenge. There is danger that religion may seem tame and irrelevant by contrast with the more stirring bugle calls of a militant secular world. Moreover, when men come back after the war how much hope can we have that they will be greatly concerned about religion in the church? Judging by our experience in the last war, we may have another "lost generation" to reckon with.

Yet this is also a time of tremendous challenge to religion. Once more the world is in a terrible predicament, not because religion has failed, but because it hasn't been tried. There is great hope that this war may prove to be the greatest argument for peace the world has ever seen, and religion may yet have something to say upon this vital subject. Just now, under the handicap of war censorship, we who believe in the values of religion cannot say publicly all that we think about war. We know its cruelty, we are repelled by its exaltation of pride and self-deception, we distrust its false and

shallow propaganda. Some day religion will have to make its full criticism of war—but that day cannot be now.

Meanwhile there are great ultimate solutions which must be kept in mind, and they belong in the area of religion. World unity, human brotherhood, the great moral and spiritual values of humanity are the contribution which religion must make at last to a decent and orderly, cooperative world.

What can the teacher of religion, in view of all these things, do now in his regular teaching routine that will be of help? I would suggest the following very definite items to which each one of you will be able to make additions:

(1) We can give to students the perspective of history. The wars of Israel for example, can still be analyzed and judged. There, at least, we can "hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may." We can also discuss the imperialisms of the Old Testament, and deal with Assyria, Babylon, Egypt and Israel without fear of censorship.

(2) As teachers of religion we can bring home to students a sense of the reality of God. If we ever get a united world, it will have to be based on the theology of monotheism. That there is one God and that he is vitally present in the universe, the Creator and Sustainer of it, is a basic theological truth, the acceptance of which could have a tremendous effect upon international

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affairs. The average layman needs more theology of the right kind.

(3) We can also teach personal Christian ethics. The lives of the great saints and missionaries down across the centuries have a message for this hour. Personal ethical problems are always of vital interest and concern to all decent and normal beings. A course on the ethics of Jesus is always timely and appropriate in the teaching of religion.

(4) Prayer and worship, the culture of the inner life, the actual practice of religion as a vital personal experience, cleansing and redeeming the soul of the worshipper, is tremendously needed and will be greatly welcomed in these trying days. Perhaps the teacher of religion has failed sometimes by being just one who communicated intellectual ideas. He must go farther and communicate the mystical appreciation and spiritual passion which are at the heart of religious faith.

Personally, I am finding a good deal of comfort these days in the Quaker interpre-

tation of Christian living. Although I am a Congregational minister, I have also joined the Wider Quaker Fellowship which is to The Friends something like the Third Order to the followers of St. Francis. The three basic principles of the Quaker philosophy of Christian living as I see them are: First, non-violence, which means that I will not coerce people, but will win them by fair play, right reason, and sacrificial love. The second principle is a dependence on the inner light—a mystic approach to life which waits, often in silence, for the guidance of the inner spirit. The third Quaker principle is that of practical service. No matter how bad any situation may be, there is always some kind and helpful deed that can be done. As a Christian I will try, even in the most difficult situations, to do the works of kindness, the things that bind up and heal—never the deeds of hatred and violence. I want to bear witness to the stabilizing and comforting values of this Quaker faith in a day of turmoil and uncertainty such as this is in which our lives are cast.

## New Occasions, New Duties\*

KATHARINE HAZELTINE PATON

THOUGH THE TITLE of this paper suggests novelty, I am well aware how little in it is genuinely new. While I would not go so far as Koheleth in declaring that there is nothing new under the sun, I am conscious that in the points I wish to make I only "tell you that which you yourselves do know." You will be justified in asking, then, why bother to rehearse ideas when they but echo yours. For this reason: I believe, to quote John Dewey, that "the new vision does not arise out of nothing but emerges through seeing in terms of possibilities, that is of imagination, old things in new relations, serving a new end, which the new end aids in creating."<sup>1</sup> He points by way of illustration to the appearance of the locomotive and the telegraph. These did not exist before the time of Stevenson and Morse. "But the conditions for their existence were there both in physical material and energies and in human capacity. Imagination seized hold upon the idea of a rearrangement of existing things that would evolve new objects. The same thing is true of a painter, a musician, a poet, a philanthropist, a moral prophet." With this concept of "newness," then, I propose to discuss certain existing conditions in the field of peculiar interest to us, namely, the study and the teaching of religion, so that our imaginations, "our seeing in terms of possibilities, old things in new relations," may be exercised, and a new vision emerge.

I have summarized these existing conditions in two statements, rather like the obverse and reverse of the same phenomena.

I. We observe conditions which reveal religious confusion:—perplexity, dissatis-

faction, criticism, rejection, denial, open opposition, irreligion, secularism, materialism, despair.

II. We observe conditions which suggest religious awakening:—deep stirrings of new life, of ardent desire, of quest for the presence of Divine Reality, for power in personal life of constructive cooperative effort, of experimentation with more simple patterns for genuine Christ-like living.

Obviously, it will be impossible to discuss these conditions *in toto*. So I have selected two aspects which will make our discussion concrete. Before naming them, however, I want to indicate a method of approach. Of course we can declare that the conditions described in my first statement arise from the general "cussedness" of human nature, and let it go at that, but I doubt whether anyone in this group would be content with so summary a dismissal of the problem. I believe that we should rather approach the dark elements in the spirit of conviction that "the sins of these others are my sins." This is Hocking's phrase, which he quotes in discussing Nichiren, the Japanese prophet of a type of Buddhism based on the Lotus Sutra. "He [Nichiren] felt that the public sufferings and his own confirmed his belief: the people had sinned and he was responsible, for he had not convinced them! If the nation was indifferent to his preaching he had failed in his personal duty." Hocking illustrates further by reference to the fasts which Gandhi inflicts on himself, "as expiation for the sins of his followers; if he has not convinced them, there has been something inadequate, he argues, in his own witness to the truth." . . . "Where such a sense of community in sinfulness exists, it must lend a deeper gravity to the disposition to spread

\*The presidential address delivered at the thirty-second annual meeting of the National Association of Biblical Instructors at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, December 28 and 29, 1941.

righteousness."<sup>2</sup> This sense of community with those who are confused, perplexed, or outright opposed to religion, this sense of responsibility for the confusion and perplexity, should be the first element in our approach.

The second should be psychological, even though we are not trained psychologists. They are concerned with motives for human behavior, and their concern should also be ours. In this connection a very stimulating remark was made in an address given by Dr. James S. Plant, director of the Child Guidance Clinic, in Newark, New Jersey. It was made apropos of the handling of problem children, in this particular case of a boy who had been brought to him for stealing. "It is not enough to say to him, 'Why did you steal?' We must go deeper than this and bring him to say 'Where can I find what I was looking for when I stole?'" So I want to go behind the questions of why people are critical and dissatisfied with religion, or why they deny and oppose, to ask the deeper question: What is it that they are seeking when they turn away?

The first aspect of the religious confusion and despair on the one hand, and the fresh stirring of new life and desire on the other, which I wish to consider is the relation of the individual religious person to group religion as it is expressed in our churches—with their inheritance of creeds, catechisms, symbols, prayers, hymns, ceremonies, and traditional observances.

The young people I teach, whom you will be teaching in a year or so, and many older people whom I meet raise questions about the church. "Why do we have to go to church?" is the constant query of the young. "I don't get anything out of it." Let us grant that some of their difficulties may arise out of their own youth, or from misconceptions about the church, or from ignorance of what its services of worship offer, or from other faults of their own. I am not so concerned now with *their* inadequacies

as with *ours*, and I ask Dr. Plant's question in slightly different form, "What is it that they are looking for when they are dissatisfied, critical, and opposed?" I often ask this question of them, and of all sorts of people who consider themselves outside the church. A one-eyed Swedish masseur, for example, one of my great friends, describes himself to me in broken English as "a very bad man who never goes to church." Yet he is the very personification of loving-kindness in his ministry of healing. "I only want to take away people's pains and help them to do their work and be happy." That is his creed. "I sometimes go to church," he confesses, "but what do I hear? Give more money to support the church. Money, money, money, always money!" When I asked what it was he sought, he replied, most simply, "I want to sit quietly and feel God and be a better man." That is what my young people are eager for, too. They seek a Presence, and a Power. I am certain that this is so, because the first subject proposed, whenever we draw up a list of topics to discuss, is prayer, and it is always discussed most earnestly. At the Northfield Girls' Conferences the course on prayer is several times the size of the other courses offered. The enthusiasm with which a group of girls now at Baldwin is setting out to transform an unattractive sub-basement room into a "quiet place" where they may go to think and pray, is evidence of their sense of need and desire. It is this interest of theirs in prayer, their concern to make it central in their lives, which convinces me that in church they seek a divine reality which they somehow fail to find.

Why? One answer is that the Christian inheritance of creeds and symbols comes between their desire and the realities they long to know. They do not know how to translate the religious terminology of the past into something vital for their own experience. "What you have inherited, that labor to possess"—is Dr. Hocking's striking



way of putting it.<sup>3</sup> We ourselves well know the effort involved in this process of making our Christian inheritance our own. Think of the burden it presents to thinking eager young people at the very beginning of their adult life when they are endeavoring to appropriate for themselves that which is vital in inherited religion.

I believe that the following analysis of John Dewey is sound:

It is conceivable that the present depression in religion is closely connected with the fact that religions now prevent, because of the weight of their historic encumbrances, the religious quality of experience from coming to consciousness, and finding the expression that is appropriate to present conditions intellectual and moral. Many persons are so repelled from what exists as a religion by its intellectual and moral implications that they are not even aware of attitudes in themselves that, if they came to fruition, would be genuinely religious.<sup>4</sup>

In the past, inability to make such adjustments has caused many thinking people to drift away from the church. Because they are not religious according to a stereotyped pattern, they think of themselves—and others often so consider them—as irreligious. You will be able to recall colleagues, as I can, who have left the church in which they had been brought up because they identified religion with the inherited formulations which they no longer considered valid in the light of their enlarging experience and growing understanding of truth in other fields of thought. Their motives—again we must go deep—were two on which we set high value: love of truth itself, and complete honesty in dealing with the results of their quest. I hope that we shall not lose another generation of thoughtful young people because of the difficulties in making the necessary adjustments between what Dr. Wieman describes as first- and second-hand religion. The first he defines as the experience which generates religion, and the second that which conserves whatever

vision and other achievements of the innovating experience are capable of being perpetuated. He continues:

It is probable that no one has first-hand religion solely. The innovating experience scarcely arises without the stimulus and guidance of some traditional culture, and this culture gives tone and character to the experience. . . . The spring could not gush if the stream did not flow. Second-hand religion is necessary but it must be constantly revitalized by the innovating religious experience if it is not to become degenerate.<sup>5</sup>

The peril is that innovating religious experience will be overborne by the weight of the secondhand religion, for the first springs up in an individual life and against it are arrayed the forces of an organized body.

My young people feel seriously about this, and we ought to take their analyses and objections into account. The most thoughtful of them ask such questions as these: "If it is necessary to keep interpreting and translating, if each person may put his own meaning into these traditional forms of words and symbols, then the forms and symbols do not mean so very much in themselves, do they?" "And if they do not mean anything exact in themselves, why does the church continue to use them?" Or again: "If you say these words but have your own meanings for them, how is any one else to know that you do not mean what you are saying? Aren't you really insincere in this? Could not some one else think you meant them as he did? Would you not really be a hypocrite?" You see for them there is a real moral issue involved.

It is entirely natural for them so to question, analyze, and criticize. In every department of their school life they have been taught to question, to submit facts to proof, to analyze meanings and attitudes. They have been taught to consider varying points of view, to think independently, to come to their own conclusions. All along the line, stress is laid upon the necessity of sincerity in the stating of their convictions, in facing facts honestly, avoiding prejudices.

Disturbingly individualistic in the earliest of their pre-college years, before they leave us, they have begun to appreciate the values of group thinking and cooperative effort. With this educational process, it is hard for them suddenly to reverse the procedures when brought face to face with religious issues. Hence their criticisms and dissatisfactions, even their denials, are evidence, I hold, of their genuine interest in religion. This is not my personal opinion only. I am certain it must also be yours. You know how constantly Dr. Fosdick reminds us of this. They are fundamentally religious, he says, or at least intensely interested in religion. However it is not in religion as a true church or an orthodox system of theology, but religion as a psychological experience. Wherever religion is presented to them not in terms of creeds and formulae or organizations to be preserved, but in terms of great things to live for, their response is immediate. "Wherever anybody thus finds any goodness, truth or beauty concerning which he feels not that it should give itself to him but that he should give himself to it, and be its loyal servant, that man has entered into an authentic religious experience."<sup>6</sup> This definition of religious experience, "life carried out of itself by something greater than itself to which it gives itself,"<sup>7</sup> seemed to one of the Eleventh Year girls "the most exciting idea" about the possibilities of her own religion that she had ever heard. It thrilled her to realize, she said, that she had a responsibility for creative living in this area of experience, a contribution to make that might not be made if she failed to be faithful to the touch of the divine in her own life. Since she is one of the most gifted girls in the school her capacity for contribution might be incalculably great.

The second aspect of the existing conditions concerns the adjustment within the individual of two sides of his experience—what he knows, and how he acts in relation to what he knows. I shall forbear general

discussion and limit myself to consideration of what he knows about the Bible and how this knowledge enters into his religious experience. There is the greatest confusion and perplexity here.

You will all remember how frequently meetings for discussing the teaching of religion become "fuzzy." There are almost as many major premises as there are people participating. At a recent meeting of the P.S.T.A. of the Philadelphia area, in the section which met to consider the place of religion in the life of the school, there was general agreement that religious attitudes should permeate the life of the school and that the content of each subject taught furnished material for cultivating these religious attitudes. Differences of opinion arose only when the meeting proceeded to discuss those courses definitely labeled religion. I detected four major groups: For the first group it meant almost exclusively Bible reading and discussion of its content for the sake of (a) acquainting the child with the story, and (b) the immediate inspirational value it would offer for higher standards of personal living.

A second group considered the function of religion to be "character education," involving a discussion of life's problems, ethical standards, codes of conduct, and cultivation of attitudes toward the evils of our social order.

A third group believed that the Bible should be treated solely as literature.

The fourth group held out for the presentation of the Biblical material from the modern critical approach.

This is the situation among teachers in the independent (or private) schools. Adults in our churches and meetings are also deeply concerned. "What shall we teach our children about the Bible? Or, about religion?" The question is raised in both forms as if in their minds the two were identical. I offer this typical incident. Last fall the president of a large suburban woman's club said, "We ought to teach our young

people about religion. They are growing up without any religion. Somebody ought to do something about it." And she was all for having the club take up as a project and promote by a sort of high-pressure salesmanship the township school of week-day religious education being undertaken by an interdenominational committee and the Parents-Teachers Association. Parents are accustomed to planning *for* their children, placing them under the care of experts and resigning personal responsibility, calling in the aid of nursery schools, church schools, summer camps, vocational guidance clinics, the pediatricians, dentists, oculists, etc., etc. They are all too ready to do these things *for* them, rather than *with* them.

Two groups may next be described as those who want more use of the Bible and those who want less. Those who want more use of the Bible lament that the Bible is not read by our young people any more, on the assumption that were it *read* more, the reading itself would produce the religious results desired. In contrast, the others declare not more use of the Bible but less is what is needed. I recall my gasp of surprise when this statement was first made to me by one of the leading contemporary thinkers and most popular of writers on spiritual living. It started up a series of most salutary reflections. What are the underlying motives of both these groups? Basic for the first, who wish the Bible more used, is the belief that they will find in the Scriptures evidence of eternal life. Basic for the second is the conviction that it ought not to be twisted out of shape to support foregone conclusions which truth in other fields of thought has rendered invalid.

Another group, increasing in size and in interest, is composed of those who frankly admit that the Bible is something of a puzzle but that a literature so precious to past generations might again have value for the present if they only knew how to approach it. They admit that they can no longer use it as did their parents and grand-

parents. They have heard rumors of lower and higher criticism, of literary and historical criticism, of archeological discoveries which prove, or disprove, the Bible. They would like to know how to use the Bible intelligently. What is more, they are willing to pay someone to teach them. The majority, however, are not able to afford this luxury, even though their desire is great. Here volunteer service is much appreciated and very necessary. Otherwise the leadership will pass into the hands of those who have great sincerity and great devotion, but little background and no training, so that their little learning becomes a danger. I anticipate momentarily my conclusions as to our new duties to say that these groups are our greatest challenge.

Finally, there is a group who feel that "salvation" does not depend at all upon what we know about the Bible, but that religion should primarily be concerned with prayer, the conduct of our daily lives, with membership in and support of the church, and with attendance at its services of worship. It is faith not knowledge which is requisite.

You will have observed that I have not included in any of the groups of adults mentioned so far the large group concerned with Religious Education in church schools. I have done this purposely because that problem is so large and so complex that it deserves a paper which will treat that topic exclusively. This paper we shall have tomorrow, if I may presume to anticipate content by title, for Harrison Elliott will discuss for us the "Implications of a Functional Approach," and I do not doubt that he will discuss the two schools of thought about the place of Biblical studies in the general program of education in religion, and the implications involved in the premises of this last group I mention.

So much then for the adults. I must add a word or two in regard to the ideas of the young people themselves.

With a class of Tenth Year boys of one of

our public schools, I had been studying the history of the church, using that splendid book of Martin Davidson's, *Good Christian Men*, but after we had concluded our discussion of Saint Benedict, the boys burst forth with a demand that we relate our study more closely to the Bible, which the next time we proceeded to do. When this came to its conclusion—we had discussed the story of the young man and his possessions—they said, "Can't we do this again?" And when I inquired what it was that they wanted, they mapped out a course of procedure that will more than occupy the remainder of the year. "We want to know how to use the Bible"; "how to find things in it"; "how to understand it"; "all about the Commandments"; "all about what's right and what's wrong"; and from the unlikeliest two, "prayer," and "I want to begin to make a philosophy of life for myself." If you could see this group, you would appreciate the significance of their demand for answers to problems in their experience, and their instinct for feeling that the Bible had something to say about them.

In the Baldwin School I read with the Tenth class, as one of the units of their English course, Old Testament narratives. My experience with them furnishes an admirable footnote to the theory that the Bible should be read only as literature. The classes refused to consider it only as literature. They were willing to discuss the literary qualities of the material, but demanded what it all meant religiously. They wouldn't be put off and accepted the results of modern approach with deepening interest. With another group of Seniors, who had not had the Tenth English in our school and wanted an historical study of the Bible, I asked again what it was in particular they were eager to know. "Well, frankly," one girl replied, "I don't know what to do with Adam and Eve." "Neither do I," said another quickly. "You see, my grandmother and I don't see eye to eye about Adam

and Eve! She thinks I haven't any religion." Others say, "I think I am an atheist. I just can't believe in the kind of God in the Bible. I don't want to believe in a God who has favorites."

But they believe in the teachings of Jesus, and the principles of his religion, and want to study them. Some years ago there was a great deal of dissatisfaction expressed about the courses. There was unanimous desire that the basic course deal with the "teachings of Jesus and the principles of his religion," and that as a second course there should be an opportunity to discuss "how you could live by the principles of Jesus in the world as it is today."

I have dwelt on these details as indications of a condition which you out of your experience could further substantiate. At both the adult-level and at the secondary school-level you will observe how it is the *experience* of the persons concerned which is determinative for the content of the courses taught. This is necessary, because, to quote Dr. Plant once more, "one takes out of every experience, only what one is ready to take. (Education today is more of a cafeteria than a boarding house.) Meaning is given only by what is coming up out of the life."

Not so to regard the importance of experience involves—I quote Dr. Hocking—"defiance of an inescapable principle of teaching: nothing can be conveyed to any mind unless it answers that mind's questions."<sup>8</sup>

And in relation to the conditions which exist in regard to the place the Bible should have in religion, or the adjustment between what we should know about it and what it should mean in our experience, I am permitting myself only one quotation from Harrison Elliott. Those who hold the educational approach "expect that through the educational process, individuals and groups will come to their own experience of Jesus, and will have the opportunity to come to their own interpretations of Jesus' meaning for them." After a brief survey of New



Testament literature viewed from this approach, he concludes: "The New Testament writings are the record of the living experience of individuals and of the early church, and the interpretations therein contained represent efforts to make clear the meaning and significance of those experiences. Moreover they represent experiences and interpretations that came out of actual situations of bafflement or conflict either in the life of individuals or in the church, and represent solutions which were found for these problems. . . . They represent that which should happen in the church today: efforts to find for themselves the meaning of the experience of Christ and to express the interpretations of the Christian faith which were true to their experience and which would have significance for the current situation."<sup>10</sup>

You will have observed that I have limited my illustrations to the two fields of work in which I have been engaged for the past three years: (1) the secondary school, both the private or independent school, and this year a group from the public school; and (2) adult groups in churches and meetings. I have not been unmindful of the fact that the majority of members of this Association are concerned with work at the college age, and the next greater number with the seminary and postgraduate years. I have, however, ruthlessly omitted consideration of these two areas of work, because the problems of these age-groups are to be presented later in our meetings, and because I wanted to emphasize the greater scope of our task. We are, after all, dealing with the same people at different levels of their experience.

What, then, are the new duties which we may discover? Viewed in the light of the present crisis they take on a new seriousness. We are well aware that as we renew our work following this recess, we return to an academic world which will be quite different from that we have known. It has

already been affected by the national emergency and we face even greater changes.

Let us consider first our responsibilities as teachers. The existing conditions (among the young people as also among adults) indicate that people are ready and eager for study of the Bible from the critical functional approach. John Page Williams writing in an earlier issue of the *Journal of Bible and Religion*, outlined the work he was then carrying on at Groton and among other things said: "There is just a possibility that part of the weakness in the average school or college student's religion may be the result of failure to understand the historical qualities of the story of Christ . . . They are woefully confused about the gospels. Some despise the Christian religion because they think it involves the acceptance of a theory of verbal inspiration of the Bible."

Further: "One need not feel called upon to give a final interpretation of all passages. The minds with which he deals are growing, their experience is far from being complete. Part of his job is to stimulate growth and prepare for a truer understanding in the future. At the same time, there are some parts of the gospel whose truth he can establish and clarify. If he presents these so that their truth is impelling and their sources are respected, he will clear the way for their being applied in the lives of his students." My own experience testifies to the validity of his conclusions. Both young people and adults find release and enthusiasm from understanding the Bible from this approach.

As I see them, our responsibilities are two: We have the opportunity for leadership in relation to this growing interest in the Bible. When people are willing to take seriously their wish to understand, to devote time, even to submit themselves to the effort of study (although we have trained them so badly in the past that they would rather listen), we have an obligation to respond.

Moreover, we have the added obligation

to insist that more of our churches take their educational task more seriously, and that they especially undertake the task of training teachers for their church schools, training them not merely in the history of their own denominations as they have every right to do, but training them also in the knowledge of the origins of our common Christian heritage, the Judaic-Christian tradition of the Old and New Testament viewed without limitations of the interpretations of the churches concerned. There are more and more people willing to pay the price of *time* devoted to this arduous task, if leadership is available.

And, finally, we have the responsibility of exerting our influence in the direction of showing the independent (or private) schools, where religious teaching is said to permeate the whole life of the school, and religion is taught by many deeply religious persons, who may or may not—probably have not—have been trained in studies of Bible or Religion, that this subject should be expertly guided, if not entirely taught by those who have been trained. In all other departments of school life experts in their fields are employed. We must seek to clarify the functions of the deeply religious person and of the trained specialist. Both are necessary.

Our second responsibility growing out of this desire for and interest in the Bible is the preparation of adequate material. There are all too few books of the calibre of A. Graham Baldwin's *Drama of Our Religion*. The material desired should be untechnical in language but thoroughly in harmony with the results of modern scholarly theory. It should be well within the range of their experience, but not written down to that level. When one considers the adult character of the material discussed in their other classes, one is ashamed of the puerile character of much of the material offered to them for religious discussion. Secondary-school teachers are very much on the alert in the

preparation of such material, but more well-tested books are greatly needed. For the adult groups, of course, the scarcity of material is not acute, since books used in undergraduate courses are usable.

Our second major responsibility concerns the relation between personal religion, religion as a creative psychological experience, or an innovating experience, and organized religion, or secondhand religion, or group religion. Our responsibilities in this area of perplexity and confusion and in view of the stirrings of new life are grave, indeed.

I realize that I tread upon delicate ground here, and I mean to "walk softly." I feel like a very small lion in a great den of Daniels. But to use Bottom's phrase, "I will roar you as mellifluously as a sucking dove." Must we not make ourselves more effective in seeing that emphasis is laid on the essentials? Dr. Fosdick is only one of several authorities whom I will name. "The present churches and the present theologies have too little to do with this saving experience of genuine spiritual devotion and daily spiritual power . . . We are insisting rather, that the sort of dogma now enjoying ecclesiastical ascendancy has no vital relation to the best spiritual life of our time and that the sort of churches now existent are often stifling the life out of real religion. . . . The tragedy of religion today is that multitudes, hungry amid the conventionalities of our ecclesiasticism, are wandering homeless, like Kipling's cat, 'by his wild lone.'"<sup>12</sup> I might multiply examples from other modern thinkers; this must suffice. Have we not personal responsibility here to bring our influence to bear as members of religious organizations that the symbols and formulae, and other conventions, do not crush out any tender stirrings of genuine religious life? Have we not to consider well this question: Are we in danger of having a church that demands freedom of conscience from the state, and yet muzzles—perhaps that is too strong a word but

let it stand—its scholars, whose research often creates the necessity for the church's restatement of certain inherited positions? It is my hope that out of considering the existing conditions, seeing the possibilities of rearrangement of the old things in new relations, new vision will emerge. Is this not an occasion for us to hear Our Lord say to us as to his first century disciples, "Do not put new wine into old wineskins."

Finally, we have new duties to ourselves.

(1) We must set ourselves to stricter intellectual disciplines of clear, dispassionate thinking, so that, like Jeremiah of old, we may stand firm "to build up and to plant." We must be more clear ourselves in regard to the relation between the intellectual and the spiritual, or between the historical and the philosophical elements in Christianity.

(2) We must deepen our spiritual resources, never forgetting that we are religious subjects. We teach what we *are*, regardless of what we say. Dr. Plant told an impressive story in this connection of a young person teaching the rivers of South America. At the close of the period, the class could, indeed, name the rivers, but what they had really learned all too well was bitterness, suspicion, materialism, and anger. This is a sobering thought, so sobering that, although it seems almost an effrontery even to mention it to this group,

mention it I must, because I know that with all the new responsibilities and increasing activities which the present emergency will create, we shall be tempted to run on an accumulated power, instead of constantly developing fresh spiritual energies. We must cultivate the detachment, the perspective and poise, the vision which can come only by frequent withdrawal from external activities into the secret dwelling place of the Most High.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>*A Common Faith*, New Haven, 1934, quoted in Kepler, T. S., *Contemporary Religious Thought*, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup>Hocking, Wm. E., *Living Religions and a World Faith*, pp. 41-43.

<sup>3</sup>Hocking, *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>4</sup>Dewey, John, "Religion versus the Religious," from *A Common Faith*, New Haven, 1934, quoted from Kepler, T. S., *Contemporary Religious Thought*, Abington-Cokesbury, 1941, p. 60.

<sup>5</sup>Wieman, H. N. *Wrestle of Religion with Truth*, New York, 1927. Chap. VIII, "The Nature of Religion," quoted from Kepler, T. S., *Contemporary Religious Thought*, p. 24.

<sup>6</sup>Fosdick, H. E., *As I See Religion*, New York, 1932. Chapter I, "What is Religion?," reprinted in Kepler, T. S., *Contemporary Religious Thought*, Abington-Cokesbury, 1941, p. 16.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>8</sup>Hocking, Wm. E., *Living Religions and a World Faith*, Macmillan, 1940, p. 158.

<sup>9</sup>Elliott, Harrison, *Can Religious Education be Christian?* Macmillan, 1940, p. 98.

<sup>10</sup>Elliott, Harrison, *Ibid.*, 1940, pp. 111, 112.

<sup>11</sup>Vol. VI, Part 4, Article entitled, "A Secondary School Course in the New Testament Based upon Form Criticism."

<sup>12</sup>From *As I See Religion*, Chap. 1. Harper, New York, 1932, reprinted in Kepler, T. S., *Contemporary Religious Thought*, pp. 18, 19.

# Christianity, Philosophy, and the Teaching of Religion

EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN

1. *The Thesis of This Paper.*—This paper is to be simply an expansion and defense of the following thesis: Since the aim of teaching religion is the understanding and application of religious truth, philosophy is essential to the teaching of religion in college and seminary.

Everyone will admit that history and psychology and sociology are essential, because they give us the data, well-organized. These disciplines, however, answer the questions: What has religion been? What is it? How does it function? They do not try to answer the question: Are religious beliefs true? What is religion worth to man?

Philosophy is the discipline that seeks to test the truth of ideas about experience as a whole: ideas of existence and ideas of value. It seeks the unity of truth; or at least, it seeks to find what degree of unity the facts and the human mind will allow. Philosophy denies the right to believe in any isolated, untested proposition, no matter what it is; it is anti-isolationist through and through. The mind cannot exist half reasonable and half unreasonable any more than the nation can exist half slave and half free. Philosophers seek for a covenant that will ground a League of all Experiences.

In other words: Philosophy is a rational survey of experience as a whole; or, less vastly stated, philosophy is the unyielding struggle to find as much sense as one can in all available experience. Hence philosophy is even more essential than history, psychology, and sociology, just as science is more essential than isolated facts.

2. *Alternative Views.* — The sweeping

claims just made for philosophy are not acknowledged by all. Far from it. In fact, there has almost always been an anti-philosophical group among Christian believers. Various considerations conspire to strengthen this group.

(a) *Religion*, we are told, *is not concerned with all things, but only with "the one thing needful."*—Those who regard religion as a specialized interest in salvation may plausibly argue that knowledge of epistemology and ontology is as little germane to religion as is knowledge of the second law of thermodynamics or of the special theory of relativity. If argument for the value of philosophy in the teaching of religion is taken to mean that knowledge of technical philosophy and science is a prerequisite to salvation, then the case is dismissed. We are not now concerned with defining the essentials of Christianity or the minimum conditions of salvation. We are concerned with the teaching of religion (especially to college and seminary students); therefore we want to know what is needed to give religion roots and fruits in the minds of thinking men. If this be true, we see the need of philosophy. No belief, however important, can strike roots or bear fruits in an active mind unless it stands in vital and concrete relations to the whole mind. If the "one thing needful" theory is the last word, then the Bible is all wrong in declaring that "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Your seeker for salvation finds the heavens and the earth dragged in from the start; he then either revolts and adopts the reductive, clean-shaven-with-Occam's razor philosophy of humanism, and has no other



basis for salvation than his own will; or else he admits "the choir of heaven and the furniture of earth" into his religion, and thus enrolls himself as a metaphysician (one thoughtfully interested in reality). In either case, religion drives him to philosophy. If the one thing needful includes a relation to the Creator and Father God, then metaphysical philosophy is essential to religion.

(b) Others say that *religion is concerned solely with values, but not with truth.*—Many scientists hold that truth about existence is the exclusive domain of science, but that the realm of values—especially of moral ideals—is unaffected by science and independent of it. Goodness is goodness, love is love, whatever becomes of the table of the elements. This is in harmony with the "one thing needful" theory, and with the conception that religion is concerned not with man the thinker, but with man the sinner, the infringer of values. One must grant that this view is plausible. Yet it overlooks two fundamentals: (1) Man cannot sever his values from his own existence or the existence of nature without a division of himself into two worlds. Such division is otherworldly, abstract, and blind to the obvious problems occasioned by the fact that values are embedded in existence and that existence is, to some extent, valuable. It can be maintained only by a rigid concentration of will. (2) Furthermore, man as philosophical thinker is necessarily concerned with all types of experience: his experience as valuer, as worshipper, as sinner, as sufferer, is subject matter for thought, along with his experience as perceiver of sensations and of the nature implied by them. No intelligible account of values can be given without relating values to existence. Although exclusive devotion to values sounds practical and therefore pragmatic, yet no pragmatist exists who wants his values in a vacuum apart from the existence of nature. We cannot eat our cake and have it too; we cannot destroy

our interest in the real, and have the values left. At any rate, it is bad manners to eat the frosting alone; and besides it is both indigestible and fattening.

(c) Still others reject our thesis because they hold that *reason cannot attain truth; only revelation can do this.*—They may argue, negatively, that the ideal of perfect philosophical coherence can never be attained and, positively (like de Santillana in *The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*), that the object, rather than our logical coherence, is what reveals itself to and imposes itself on our thought. In both of these contentions the critic of philosophy is right; yet he has not thereby excluded philosophy. He has on the negative count excluded rationalistic dogmatism and on the positive count affirmed objective revelation. Yet he has overlooked a very simple fact; namely, that the very mind whose right to rational absolutism he has undermined must itself, for some reason or no reason, assent to and interpret the revelation. Whatever aid may be rendered by the Holy Spirit or by supernatural grace in this assent and interpretation, must in turn be accepted or rejected, with or without reason, by the mind. No view of revelation should cause the mind to abdicate its very nature as a unity of consciousness. Hence, no revelation, as the Catholic Church well knows, is unrelated to man's best philosophical thoughts. To believe with reasons is really to grant philosophy a right; to believe without reasons is to deny both the dignity of religion and the integrity of personality. Extreme reliance on revelation, accompanied by a rejection of philosophy, often conceals radical skepticism—or at least, a fear lest faith, if investigated, may be found to be false.

(d) Some opponents of philosophy will agree that the arguments thus far presented are dialectically impeccable and plausible; but they will argue that *the differences of opinion among philosophers prove that philosophy is futile.* Away with it, they cry.

That this is an odd argument to be advanced either by a religious believer or by a Biblical scholar is almost self-evident. They specialize in differences of opinion! Seriously, if differences among philosophers—naturalists, idealists, pragmatists, personalists, positivists, metaphysicians — prove that philosophy is futile, they also prove that religion is futile. Religion has been unable on any basis to reconcile Protestant and Catholic, Calvinist and liberal; the lion has usually had to swallow the lamb in order for them to lie down together. Is philosophy, then, if not futile, at least as badly off as religion, and hence a blind guide? No, I should reply: since philosophy has the special task of making us fully aware of the human situation, it at least opens our eyes to our predicament and points out possibilities as does no other discipline.

(e) Be that as it may, opponents insist, whatever the truth may be for the learned, *philosophy is confusing to the ordinary student*. The ordinary student is probably identical with the famed "man on the street," "the charcoal burner," or any member of *οἱ πολλοί*. These ladies and gentlemen are already confused and easily further confusable. Doubtless philosophy may confuse many of them yet more. But let us not forget that they are already confused about religion, about the value of life, about war and peace, about personal standards of conduct. In this chaos, any honest philosophy, however hard, is better than none—and more helpful to the student.

3. *Philosophy and the Teachings of Jesus*.—By the teachings of Jesus, I mean either the gospels as they stand or any fair sample from them. It is clear that these teachings show that Jesus was no technical philosopher. He shows no sign of knowing that Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle ever lived—much less the Sophists. There is betrayed in him only one flash of skepticism ("Why hast thou forsaken me?"), and that in no philosophic mood. No trace of

epistemological theory is evidenced, whatever his knowledge-claims might be. Indeed, with all his emphasis on experience, Jesus shows no interest in facts as such; all his judgments are value judgments, and he mentions facts solely to illustrate or enforce the good or evil which they embody. Jesus seemed to have no traffic at all with objective scientific or philosophical descriptions.

Nevertheless, whether or not we agree with Professor Herman H. Horne in calling Jesus explicitly a philosopher, he certainly was an implicit philosopher. Not knowing Socrates, he used the Socratic method of questioning. Ignorant of the myths of Plato, he created new and more searching myths in his parables. Without regard to Aristotle, he taught the doctrine of final causes, and held that the meaning of the whole movement of reality, both in man and in nature (sun and rain, evil and good, lilies and sparrows, rocks and tempests) was to be found in a metaphysical reality which he called the heavenly Father. All of the value judgments of Jesus are philosophical in their meaning, both because they are related to God as the meaning of the whole, and also because any value judgment that claims to be true must be philosophical. Such judgments claim a right to govern and judge all experience, and in turn they must be tested by their relevance to all experience; claims and tests like these are philosophical.

Jesus, therefore, can be understood only by relating his meanings to all available experience. A purely historical study of Jesus must ascetically refrain from agreement or disagreement with Jesus, and from criticism or testing, acceptance or rejection of the teachings and personality of Jesus. Such historical investigation is a labor of idealistic devotion to truth which is imperatively needed—needed as a basis for clear-headed Christian religion and philosophy. But historical criticism of records about Jesus is not religion or philosophy and is

no equivalent for them. And the more thoroughly historical studies are pursued the clearer it becomes that the portrait of Jesus and all that lies back of it concerns a person whose interest was never in bare facts but always in values and their place in the cosmos. Further, like a true philosopher, his appeal was never to violence or compulsion, but always to persuasion. His "what think ye," the Johannine "if any man willeth to do," the Synoptic "by their fruits," alike reveal the philosophical spirit, the appeal to experience and to reason.

4. *Philosophy and the Teachings of Paul.*—In Saint Paul we have a figure at once less philosophical and more philosophical than Jesus. Paul was less philosophical than Jesus; Jesus was never so hasty and so self-refuting as to couple philosophy with vain deceit. But Paul was more philosophical than Jesus. It is precisely because he was so keenly aware of the theological philosophy of the Pharisees who educated him, of Greek poets and Stoics, of metaphysical interpretations of ethics and of Christian experience, of the superiority of rational prophetic interpretations to any meaningless speech with tongues, of the need of testing the spirits—it is, I say, just because he was aware of all these that he was so troubled by a type of philosophy that obscured basic Christian values and led to vain deceit. Paul's words, instead of being a condemnation of philosophy, are a tribute to its importance and to the need of possessing criteria which distinguish the true from the false.

The resemblances between Paul and Plato have often been noticed. Paul almost seems to be copying Plato when he writes that the things that are seen are temporal and the things that are not seen are eternal. The contrasts between letter and spirit, between things present and things to come, between speaking with tongues (cf. Plato and Mania) and with the understanding, are all Platonic in spirit, as are his classifications of the virtues, emphasis on

love (whatever the differences of *ἔπος* and *ἀγάπη*), and social concern, specifically his organic theory of society. Plato and Paul were both philosophical mystics.

But another aspect of Paul as philosopher has escaped attention. Everyone knows that Paul exhausted every figure of speech he could summon from Roman law and administration, Greek athletics, Jewish theology, physiology, psychology, and history, in order to convey to his readers the truths of Christian experience and faith. What this means has not been seen so clearly. Paul's figures, taken literally, have led to bickerings, dogmatisms, and conflicts among Christians. Had interpreters perceived that Paul was a religious empiricist with an inadequate language, dogmatists would have been deterred and semanticists would have been relieved. Paul was an empirical metaphysician, and not nearly so dogmatic a one as he sounds or as he is made to appear by Biblical realists, so-called. Paul's metaphysics, and this is the main point, was based on experience—his experience of new life and new meaning for all life, in Christ. Unless we see him as a religious empiricist in this sense, we shall forever miss the heart of what he is driving at in his teachings. How far his metaphysics is justified by his experience, and how much of his figurative language he intended to be taken literally, are matters for further investigation. But there can hardly be doubt of the philosophical importance of Paul or of the need of philosophical interpretation of his experiences and ideas.

5. *Philosophy and History of Theology.*—It would be neither necessary nor desirable to try to trace the importance of philosophy for the history of theology. A few high spots may be mentioned. Justin Martyr was clear. The Logos in Heraclitus and Socrates was the same Logos that dwelt in Jesus. Clement and Origen were likewise friendly to philosophy. Many of the fathers regarded Greek philosophy as *praeparatio evangelica*, Tertullian to the contrary not-

withstanding. Augustine could not have attained his intellectual and spiritual grandeur without his pilgrimage through the philosophies of his day. In Thomas à Kempis we have one who would rather feel compunction than know its definition; but in the incomparably greater Thomas Aquinas we find a man who felt the need of both experience and reason, both mysticism and philosophy. In fact the greatest mystics have for the most part insisted on the discipline of philosophical thought as a required preliminary to the mystical ecstasy. Modern theology has been profoundly influenced by the philosophies of Kant and of Hegel and has suffered in proportion as these philosophers have been ignored or misinterpreted. Schleiermacher was a great philosophical theologian. Ritschl rested back, more than is realized, on the metaphysics of Lotze, as distinguished from the metaphysics of Hegel. Wilhelm Hermann was a neo-Kantian, and a great admirer of Natorp. Tennant in England, and H. C. Sheldon and Knudson in America, interpret theology in relation to personalistic metaphysics. Wieman relates theology to the philosophies of Dewey and Whitehead, as does Hartshorne, with very different results. In Karl Barth we see the attempt to separate theology from philosophy first assume the guise of a modern double truth and then cast off that guise and modify first principles under the pressure of the war: for he has recently admitted an appreciation of that British Pelagianism which is out of harmony with his whole previous doctrine. This sketch does not prove the truth or value of either theology or of philosophy; but it does prove that he who does not comprehend philosophy will find a large part of theology a closed book. Perhaps it should be: but how can one know this if one lacks the means of judging?

#### 6. *Philosophy and Current Problems.*—

(a) *Many contemporary movements are incomprehensible without philosophy.* There is no doubt that science and religion are

two of the prominent manifestations of human culture, whatever else they may or may not be; and the name of philosophy has been given to attempts to understand their relations. A keen thinker like Hugh Miller thinks that philosophy cannot undertake this task of correlation, but that it can be performed by religion. In reply one can only comment that the part of religion which does what philosophy has always tried to do must be strangely like philosophy. In fact it must be philosophy, or at least a part of it. A rose by any other name—.

Meanwhile the problem is on us. The necessary neglect of values by scientists and the unnecessary neglect of science by religionists have produced acute tension in our civilization. The Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion is a large scale and important attack on the problem. Yet the statement in *Science News Letter* by the very distinguished physiologist, Hudson Hoagland, shows how far we have to go. He argues that the interest of scientists in values is proved by the fact that they are as ready to fight for democracy as is the next man. But that is just the trouble. Scientists too often fall in line and are willing to fight for any government, precisely because they lack a rational philosophy of religious values. The fact that their emotions are, in America, generously democratic is far from showing that scientists have a tenable theory of value. More nearly, it shows the opposite. Heavy spade work needs to be done on the values presupposed by science and those presupposed by religion and their relations. As the Conference just mentioned is trying to bring together leaders for examination of this problem, so many learned societies, like the NABI and the American Philosophical Association, are constantly working on it. Dr. Ruth Nanda Anshen is editing a series of volumes (beginning with *Freedom*) with a like aim. The National Council on Religion in Higher Education has labored on the task for years. Dr. Frederick Kettner,



of the Biosophical Institute, is trying to promote studious interest in it among undergraduates. Even Bertrand Russell has written a book on *Religion and Science*. How can all this activity and struggle be comprehensible without a knowledge of philosophy, which plays so large a part in it?

Bertrand Russell has rightly pointed out an important change in the situation. He sees that religious leaders in general have ceased to contend against science, and that the conflict between science and religion is no longer so important as the relations of both science and religion to social and economic values. But we comment that this shift is not a shift from philosophy, but rather a shift within philosophy. The vital question no longer concerns the laws of nature, but the purpose of nature. Attention must center on the goal of existence. For what values ought man to strive, and why? These questions are philosophical.

(b) *There is chaos in standards without philosophy.* That chaos in standards prevails is evident in nearly every gathering of professors or students for the discussion of religion, almost as much as it is in the laxity of thought and morals which has spread so widely in the world as a result of the two great Wars. In order to avoid the chaos, it is sometimes proposed that we declare a moratorium on philosophy (or cut out the C. from the Y. M. C. A.) and agree on moral aims. But the moral aims thus agreed on, without a philosophical foundation, turn out to be dogmatic and untouchable absolutes,—absolutes for War or for Peace, let us say, which cannot envisage an alternative view without emotional outbreak and nervous breakdown. In our academic classrooms, students are presented with physico-chemical, historical, sociological, psychological, religious and irreligious points of view; and if they are not taught to view philosophically the competing claims of the social or behavioristic or historical or religious approach to be the only

sound method, the result of education simply depends on which department makes the loudest noise. As Dr. William Adams Brown once observed, it is a pity that there have to be departments of philosophy; ideally, he suggested, they should be abolished, if only we could be sure that every subject would then be taught philosophically. With that guarantee, I'd gladly second his motion.

The critic of philosophy, however, has a ready reply to all this. Maybe there is chaos without philosophy; but there is also chaos with and within philosophy; so what gain have we?

Before commenting on this point, which has already come before us in another form, let us intensify it. Yes, there is chaos today; and the chaos is a chaos of philosophies. Without being so one-sided as to argue either that chaos is wholly due to the philosophies (as extreme intellectualists might contend) or the philosophies wholly due to the chaos (as Marx on his off days seemed to think), we cannot doubt that the philosophies have actually added to the chaos. At any rate, the most potent current movements are metaphysical in their world view, and are potent to some extent because of being metaphysical.

The Roman Catholic Church is potent and metaphysical. The scholastic philosophy in its modernized forms is the very backbone of the Catholic intellect. Christian Science, a comparatively insignificant movement, is in many respects powerful; and it rests on a highly recondite metaphysics, which its followers have to know. Communism is interpreted by a peculiar form of evolutionary naturalism, with a double-aspect ontology, and a teleological faith, grounded in the nature of the process, that a just social order is coming; this dialectical materialism, or Diamat, is not so fully grasped by the rank and file as the theories of Christian Science have to be by the faithful; but under no circumstances are deviations allowed from the

orthodox faith. Quaintly enough, this social-economic-cosmic metaphysics must not be called metaphysics, since Communist writers have an uneasy (and not unjustified) feeling that metaphysics is idealism. To label Diamat as metaphysics, for them, is a treacherous act of a flunkie of capitalism, who is doubtless also a lickspittle. This policy is not without analogy among Christians who fear to call their metaphysical faith a metaphysics lest they be exposed to the gnawing tooth of dialectical reason.

While we do not readily think of Nazism as a rational or philosophical movement, yet the *Nationalsozialistische Weltanschauung* is a metaphysic. On the one hand, Mr. Hitler regards himself as "an instrument of the creator of the universe." On the other, blood and soil are viewed as the ultimate metaphysical realities which warrant racial loyalty and elevate it to supreme significance. Kurt Reinl, in his *Blut und Boden*, wrote a remarkable little system of metaphysics for Austrian peasants, in which the mythic tree Yggdrasill was taken at once as symbolic of the organic unity of the universe and of the organic unity of the race. In this pantheistic naturalism, the peasantry were the roots of the tree, giving it life by digging in the soil; yet it is the tree, not any part of it, that really counts. The individual is but the leaf that turns brown, and falls, and in its death fertilizes the soil. The leaves are nothing unless they die. The tree lives, the leaves perish. Thus the *Ich-Zeit* of individualism has passed by; the *Wir-Zeit* of a co-operative, disciplined National Socialism has come, with its Parade Attack in which the advance, in close formation, treads on the bodies of fallen comrades.

Yes, the chaos of today is a chaos of philosophies. Admitted. But we must not forget that where there is a clear and fundamental philosophy dominating a group, there we find integration, power, and purpose. If the religious educator is to cope with this situation, he must know the philos-

ophies involved and meet them on their own ground. They cannot be exterminated by concentration camps or the battlefield, still less, by ignorance. The real battlefield is that of the mind, the spirit. If religion fails there, if it draws back from the metaphysical task, its retreat on that front might be the harbinger of a complete débâcle. God requires fellow-laborers in the field of the mind as well as in the field of action and of faith.

Yes, we repeat, there is chaos in standards even with philosophy, but the chaos without philosophy is unspeakably worse than the chaos with it. Yes, but—begging Dean Sperry's pardon. The "but" may be summarized under four points. (1) In the chaos that exists with philosophy, we are at least aware of our condition. There is hope if we are conscious of where we stand or how far we have fallen. (2) In the philosophical chaos, we are aware of alternatives. It is doubtless weakening to dwell forever on alternatives to one's position; but it is positively deadening not to be aware of them. Better live and be weak than die a death of impotence. (3) In the philosophical chaos, we have a method. The appeal to total experience and to reason is a tie that binds all philosophers together. At philosophical gatherings, one often hears the comment that philosophers, however divergent, are closer together in spirit than philosophers and unphilosophical specialists in any field can ever be. Philosophical method—the view that "the true is the whole," as Hegel put it—is a spiritual bond in the midst of chaos.

(4) A fourth point needs special interpretation. In one sense, reason is committed to chaos, for reason is the process of endless inquiry. Its investigations can never reach an end until all actual and possible experience of all persons, present, past and future, is known, and coherently interpreted. Coherent interpretation requires not merely a consistent theory, but the most systematically and completely consistent

theory. Even if all possible experience were available and known to be available, who could be sure when he had exhausted all possible hypotheses and had chosen from among them the one impeccably best? It is clear that the task of reason can never be complete: that it is an ample assignment for an eternal God and a society of immortal spirits. From the point of view of any earthly thought, reason is relative.

Karl Groos, therefore, has suggested the term theoretical relativism, and has set over against it practical absolutism. For, after all, reason is not truly reason, nor loyal to her mission, if she dwells only on the infinite task ahead of every mind. The demand of reason is to consider the whole; and the fact of practical decision and practical action is as much a part of the whole as is endless inquiry. Reasoning is the act of a person; and every act is in a sense absolute. In particular, our minds are so constructed that we cannot help believing some things, even if absolute proof be forever lacking. That we now exist, that we can communicate, that we are all conscious—these are practical absolutes. Indeed, the category of practical absolute covers every belief which we trust sufficiently to use as a basis for action.

Thus, for the thoughtful mind, the problem of life is the dialectical tension of theoretical relativism and practical absolutism, of openmindedness and loyalty, in which each is tested by the other and by its contribution to the whole, and in which neither is self-sufficient. Life is neither endless groping nor absolute assertion; yet it is both. In this paradox lies the unending fruitfulness of philosophy in its interplay with science and religion and everyday experience.

*7. Liberal Christianity is Harder to Teach Than a New Religion.* You will recognize that I have been defending liberalism. We may as well admit that liberalism (along with conservatism, Calvinism, Barth-

ianism, Communism, and Naziism) has failed to convince and redeem the world has failed to convince and redeem the world to date. There is no easy road to redemption, and liberalism—the way of philosophical reason—is one of the hardest. Quasi-liberals have confused the issue by identifying liberalism with the spineless dogma that everything is all right. It is all right to do as you please and think as you please; to violate or to conform to every convention, so long as you do not consult anyone else about your decisions. This travesty of liberalism has come to cause many to regard a liberal as an unprincipled chameleon. He is no liberal, no free man, who, being freed from bondage to tradition, at once enslaves himself to the worse bondage of chance desires or contemporary conventions.

All this has nothing to do with true liberalism, except as its deadly enemy. The liberal is the man who thinks responsibly; who believes, with Socrates, that the unexamined life is not worth living; with Jesus, that men are known by their fruits. The liberal is the lover of wisdom who seeks to see his life as a whole in the light of the highest truth he can find. The Christian liberal is one who seeks to live his life in the light of the portrait of Jesus in the gospels, and with receptive openness to the Holy Spirit. The figure of Jesus reminds him of his sinfulness and inadequacy, while at the same time calling forth all his powers of loyalty, devotion, and faith. The Christian liberal believes that one phase of his Christian growth is the construction and application of the best philosophy he can conceive in the service of the best cause he can find—the cause of Christ.

Liberal Christian philosophy is a persuasive means of unifying the thought and action of confused students taught by confused faculties in a confused world. If we see the star of truth shining above the storm, our faith may become at once saner and calmer, while losing none of its urgency.

# The Implications of a Functional Approach

HARRISON S. ELLIOTT

THE CENTRAL issue at the present time regarding the nature of Christianity, which has bearing upon the teaching of religion, concerns the part human beings play in the achievement of Christian experience and the formulation of Christian beliefs. If Christianity has a special kind of revelation for the understanding of which historical study and critical thinking are not suitable but lead into error; if understanding of the New Testament accounts of Christianity and if knowledge of God comes *only* through faith or through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, then I cannot see what is the function of the teacher of religion. If Christianity is something in the understanding and realization of which the processes utilized in other aspects of teaching are not suitable, as would seem to be the implication of some of the claims about Christianity, then I am puzzled to know how it would be taught. The critics of a functional approach have had a great deal to say about what they consider to be the nature of Christianity and they have criticized the educational processes followed by those who take a functional approach; but none of them, so far as I am aware, has made clear how on the basis of his conception of Christianity, religion would be taught.

This type of emphasis seems to me to be due to a misconception of the nature of Christianity. The uniqueness of Christianity is not due to the fact that in it God has been revealed by entirely different processes than those which have been followed in man's long search for God and for the meaning of life and destiny. Christianity has been worked out in the human scene by the use of the faculties and processes with

which we have been endowed by God. It is wrought out in actual human situations and represents the Christian solutions which individuals and groups have found for their basic needs and problems in these situations. The interpretations of these experiences have also been made by human beings. Since Christianity is experienced by human beings in human situations, the background experience of the individuals involved, their immediate personal problems and situations, as well as current conditions, assumptions, and ideologies will affect both the experience and the interpretation. Since the situations and problems facing individuals and generations vary, it is inevitable that there will be varieties of Christian experience and interpretation. Consequently, the assumption of some that there is a single normative experience and interpretation of the Christian religion seems unwarranted. The Christian religion cannot be compressed into any one set of experiences and interpretations. It is to be expected that the emphasis and interpretation will vary with human need and situation. Even in the New Testament there is a record of a variety of Christian experience and interpretation; and there seems ample evidence that in this earliest period, the Christian religion was worked out by human beings in relation to personal problems and current conditions and ideologies. This process which commenced in the New Testament period has gone on throughout Christian history and is taking place today. This recognition of varieties of Christian experience and interpretation and this expectation that in the face of new problems and diverse ideologies, Christianity will be experienced and interpreted anew, directly



affects how religion will be taught. There should be something unique and creative about every new class in religion and in the experience of every student who is studying religion.

A second point is important. Christianity is primarily an experience. Without Christian experience, there would be no Christian religion to teach. Christian doctrines are interpretations of Christian experience. If Christianity had not been experienced, doctrines would not have been developed. Christian doctrines, formulated often after long reflection, are efforts to set forth the basis for and the meaning of the experience, as interpreted by those involved in it. Creeds are the verbal formulations of the beliefs which developed in connection with the Christian solution of living problems. Christian theology is, or should be, a more extended formulation of the Christian answers to living problems, which have been realized in experience before or as they were being verbally formulated. Unless the theologian is interpreting what has been wrought out in experience, the theology has the ring of unreality. This fact that Christianity is first of all an experience and that Christian beliefs are interpretations of experience is of basic importance for the teaching of religion.

Third, Christianity is more than the experience of those now living. It is the experience of all those who have named the name of Christ. The record of the most significant of these Christian experiences is found on the pages of the New Testament and of church history. There is a record also of the interpretations which were made of these experiences. Christianity has a history as well as a present-day manifestation. No one can understand Christianity fully unless he has some grasp of these experiences and interpretations of the past. One of the functions of the teacher of religion is to release students from their contemporary-mindedness, which places

them at the mercy of immediate circumstances, and to make available to them as they are working out their own religious experience and faith these significant experiences out of the past.

Fourth, Christian experience always involves an object of that experience. While the experience may be said to be subjective in the sense that it is something which happens within or to a human individual, it is also objective because it is a response to something given, something which the individual does not create out of his imagination. While there are varieties of Christian experience, all Christian experience is in one way or another an experience of Jesus Christ and of God through Christ. Jesus Christ is central in the Christian religion. Further, all Christians agree that they have found in their relationship to Jesus Christ an experience and interpretation of God, however different may be their beliefs as to how Jesus Christ makes God manifest in human life.

The objective character of Christian experience should be emphasized, because some critics of a functional approach have held that because emphasis is placed upon the human experience and upon the human interpretation of the experience, the religion of those with this approach is a human creation, that man creates his own God. It is true that there has been at times a basis for this implication. God has been spoken of as if he were an idealistic creation like Uncle Sam. But even Uncle Sam is not a fiction of the imagination. He is the interpretation of something very objective and real which the interpreters did not create; viz., the life and ideals of a nation. Without the nation, there could be no Uncle Sam. To say that we are dependent upon human experiences and interpretations of the manifestations of the divine no more implies that thereby the interpreters created the divine out of their imagination than to imply that because we are dependent upon human

descriptions of mountains, the interpreter created the mountain. All religion is revealed; that is, it is based upon manifestations of the divine in the human scene. It is true that there are differences of judgment as to what should be included within manifestations of the divine, but that does not vitiate the point. God is known only through his manifestations in the human scene. All other conceptions of God are mere speculation. Vital religious experience is the response to what the one having the experience believes to be God.

The fifth point has to do with what manifestations and interpretations of the divine have been incorporated within Christianity. While there is no question about the centrality of Jesus Christ in the Christian's experience and interpretation of God, it is nevertheless true that Christianity has been influenced at different periods by its contact with other conceptions of religion. This happened within the New Testament period in the contact of Christianity with Hellenistic thought as is most clearly seen in the Fourth Gospel and in Hebrews. It happened when Christianity met the revival of Aristotelian philosophy and the result was the theology of Thomas Aquinas which is normative in the Roman Catholic Church. It does not detract from the unique significance of Jesus Christ to recognize that God has not left himself without witness in many other ways. If the teacher of religion accepts this viewpoint, instead of considering non-Christian religions in order to prove their error as compared with Christianity, they will be included as part of the data for working out Christian experience and interpretation, to be studied critically, to be sure, but nevertheless appreciatively. Indeed the teacher of religion will be alert for new and enriched interpretations of the Christian religion which have emerged out of the contact of Christianity with non-Christian religions in missionary endeavors. Further, if the teacher

of religion accepts this viewpoint, he will include in his teaching of religion manifestations of God in nature, in history, in human life. Instead of considering the data of the physical and social sciences as irrelevant, he will recognize that these are more accurate descriptions of the manifestations of whatever power is in and back of the universe and is revealing himself in human life. Science has profoundly influenced human experience and inevitably must be taken into account in Christian experience and Christian interpretations today, and therefore, in teaching religion.

I have presented five points of emphasis in regard to Christianity which seem to be the most important in their implications for teaching religion: first, Christianity is a human experience, humanly interpreted; second, Christianity is an experience and an interpretation of experience; third, Christianity has a history; fourth, Christianity is an objective experience, in which Jesus Christ is central; fifth, Christianity has been influenced by other manifestations and interpretations of religion.

It is evident from this analysis of the nature of Christianity that in teaching the Christian religion, our basic subject matter is Christian experience. When one speaks of an experience, he is referring to something which happened at a particular time and place. But no experience is an isolated event. What happens in the immediate experience is influenced by earlier experiences, and following any experience there is often reminiscence and reflection upon its meaning. In turn any experience influences subsequent action. Therefore, any experience is related to a larger stream of experience.

It is not possible to understand any experience except in relation to the background experiences out of which it developed. This fact has direct bearing on how religion shall be taught. To illustrate: Saul had a cataclysmic experience on the Damascus road. But this was not an isolated

event. It can be understood only in relation to earlier events in Saul's life. There seems to be ample evidence that Saul's experience of Jesus Christ grew out of an unsolved problem in his own life. As a son of the Law, he felt obligated to obey the Law perfectly. But he found as a human being that he was not able to attain this perfection. In his persecution of the Christians, he was inevitably exposed to those of Christian experience. Probably the conduct and testimony of Stephen, when he was stoned, were major influences. Reflecting on what he had seen, he seems to have become convinced that somehow in relation to Jesus Christ these Christians had a source of power which he did not possess. Whether the cataclysmic experience upon the Damascus road occurred at the time that he arrived at this conviction or grew out of it, there is no way of knowing. In any case, the Damascus road incident illustrates an important factor in all experience; viz., the integral relationship of reflection and interpretation to the experience. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that reflection and interpretation are integral parts of any experience. Saul's reflection upon his problem in relation to his contacts with the Christians influenced the immediate experience on the Damascus road and in turn the Damascus road experience profoundly influenced his interpretation of the Christian religion. It was on the basis of his own experience that he came to the conviction that the Christian is no longer under the Law, but that in Christ he is a new creature who has a new basis for conduct. In teaching religion, this basic inter-relationship between Christian experience and Christian interpretations should be recognized. It is not possible to understand Christian doctrines except in connection with the situations and experiences out of which they developed.

A distinction between what happened and the interpretation of that which happened is important in teaching religion. To secure as accurate an account of what happened

as possible is important, but individuals may agree as to what happened and disagree in their interpretations of the event. Interpretations of any immediate experience are influenced by past experiences of the individual and by currently accepted assumptions and ideologies. For example, the Gospels record various healing miracles. In the record, it is stated that those who were healed had their maladies because they were possessed of devils and that they were cured because the devils were driven out of them by Christ's power. That something significant actually happened to these individuals, there seems little doubt. But in interpreting why it happened, the writers accepted the current beliefs in regard to demon possession. Doubtless these were accepted also by those who were cured and were an important factor in the cure. Nevins gives comparable examples out of comparatively recent experience in China, where individuals believed the source of their difficulty was demon possession and where they were cured through the exorcising of the devils by the power of Christianity. A Christian physician, with training in mental hygiene, might accept the facts as true, and yet give an entirely different interpretation of the operation of Christ's healing power from that given in the New Testament records. This is but a single example of the fact that the events recorded in the Bible and in later Christian history took place in particular social situations where there were current ideologies, and both what happened and the interpretations of the experiences were influenced by the currently accepted beliefs. It shows that in teaching religion, it is necessary to be constructively critical of the interpretations of the experiences recorded. It is often necessary to reinterpret an experience on the basis of new knowledge not available at the time and in terms of the situation facing the members of a class.

This distinction between what happened

and the interpretation of these events is important, not only in the understanding of single incidents like the miracles, but also in the study of the interpretations of the meaning of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. The diverse interpretations in the letters of Paul, in the synoptic Gospels, in the Fourth Gospel, and in Hebrews were influenced by the differences in the problems just as the distinctive points of emphasis of various denominations have a social origin. This entire discussion of experience and the interpretation of experience should make evident the importance of a thorough-going historical approach to teaching religion. Christian experience and beliefs can be grasped only when the personal and social conditions under which they developed are understood and felt by the members of a class.

This distinction between what happened and the interpretation of the events takes on especial importance in teaching the Bible. Large sections of the Bible, which have the form of history, or biography, are not historical or biographical in the ordinarily accepted connotation of these terms. They are religious or sermonic documents. Since the purpose was homiletic rather than historical or biographical, events have evidently been selected, described, and interpreted in relation to current problems in order to emphasize teachings which seemed important in meeting current situations. It would seem evident under these circumstances that liberties would be taken with the historical or biographical material, particularly since the documents come from a period before the advent of historical writing in the modern sense of the term. These writers probably felt no more compulsion for exact historical writing than does a preacher when he uses an illustration to make a point in his sermon. It is evident, therefore, that in teaching these parts of the Bible more is necessary than to deal with the historical situations when the

events took place. A double rather than a single historical approach is necessary. For example, to understand the interpretations of Jesus Christ made in the Gospels, it is necessary to be aware of the situation in the primitive church and in the current scene, when and where these interpretations were made. A course on Old Testament history or on the life and teachings of Jesus is difficult, and the teacher is thrown back more than is sometimes recognized on interpretations of these events.

There is still one other factor which must be taken into account in an experience approach to teaching religion. I have already indicated that the Biblical material has been edited or written around problems which were important at the time the documents were edited or written. But many of the problems which were so strongly felt at the times the Biblical material was developed are no longer pertinent; and in any case, the situations in the church and in the world are very different. For example, prominent in the organization of the New Testament material was the Parousia. The question of Christ's return occupied the attention of the primitive church. For the great majority of students, the second coming in the form which concerned the primitive church or concerns small sections of the church today is a dead issue. To attempt to teach the New Testament around this issue is to deal with material of antiquarian, but not of living interest and importance. Therefore, even if a teacher of the Bible succeeds in arranging his teaching so as to deal with the material as it is organized in the Bible, he may find that his teaching lacks vitality. It is an important principle in teaching from an experience approach that historical material shall be organized around types of problem and of situation which have current meaning and relevance. It is not possible to teach all of history or all of the Bible. Selection is inevitably made. The function of the Bible teacher is not to teach



the Bible material just as it is organized in the Biblical records, but to reorganize this material so that it will be meaningful for his students. To illustrate, Bewer's *The Literature of the Old Testament* is true to the organizing principles of the Biblical editors and writers, but it probably does not represent as significant an approach for teaching the Old Testament to college and high school students as does Wallis's *God and the Social Process*, in which the Old Testament material is reorganized around a major problem felt today and central in the Old Testament records. If Bible teaching is to have vitality and if the Bible is to be a living rather than an antiquarian record, it is necessary in organizing a course that selection shall be made of the types of situation and of problem which are important and meaningful to students today, but which were also of sufficient importance in the Biblical writing to give a significant basis for reorganizing the material. Events out of the past can be entered into imaginatively only as there is some basis in present experience for the use of the imagination. Humbly but none the less inevitably the Bible teacher must reorganize and reinterpret the significant events recorded in the Bible in terms of current situations and problems.

For this reorganization of the material the principle seemingly most often followed is the least useful; viz., merely giving the events in chronological order. By this it is by no means implied that there should be no attention to chronological order in any organization. More is needed than a jumble of material without reference to time or place. But there is nothing more deadly than a mere chronological recital of facts. For the Old Testament editors and writers the theistic problem was central; and this organizing principle can be used fruitfully with some classes, particularly of mature adults. But for many classes, the problems with which the theistic question was inex-

tricably inter-related will prove more fruitful. There was the problem of a land in which to settle, so vividly felt today as we are more involved in the struggle for territory in Europe and Africa and the Far East. There was the clash between two opposing ideologies of social and economic life, the Amorite and the Hebrew, dramatized today in the struggle between conflicting ideologies in the second World War. There was the effort in the later history of this small nation to maintain its autonomy and life in the midst of the complex international events and the struggles of great conquering nations. There was the exile, when a small minority group tried to maintain its life in the midst of a foreign civilization. If there ever was a time when the events and the prophetic utterances of the Old Testament can be made to live for students, it is the present.

The New Testament material, especially the life of Paul and the later documents of the New Testament, is difficult to teach to college and high school students, because, as already indicated, the problems which agitated the primitive church have very little reality to the average college or high school student, and often are not even too meaningful to the theological students. Here again, the efforts to trace the missionary journeys of Paul on a map is about as deadly a form of Bible teaching as can be imagined, although not quite as deadly as to attempt to learn the events without a map. Despite the difficulties Paul faced and his evident heroism, the efforts to make a hero story out of Paul does not succeed very well when children are brought up on The Lone Ranger and when they are thrilled by Lieutenant Kelly's lone bombing of the Horuma at the sacrifice of his own life. This material can be made much more meaningful to those in mission lands than in this country, for it is so dominated by the problems of the establishment of the church in the midst of conflicting ideologies and untoward condi-

tions. It is doubtful whether attempt should be made to teach much of the New Testament material, except the Synoptic Gospels, before the Junior year in college. It is on the whole material for those who are mature Christians or who feel the problems of the church with which the theologians are wrestling. There are exceptions to this broad generalization, but certainly a more careful selection and organization of this material is necessary than is often followed.

The same procedure needs to be followed in the organization of the New Testament material as has already been suggested for that in the Old Testament. There are several possibilities. The hope for a deliverer and the various conceptions as to how this deliverance would come, culminating in the completely apocalyptic interpretation in Revelation, might be one. Certainly this is a felt problem today. The relation of Christianity to the currently accepted practices and particularly to the Jewish Law could probably be used in relation to the present situation. Organization of the material around major ethical problems, such as those of war, race, class and economics, and around major religious problems, such as prayer and belief in God, is possible. Since the synoptic Gospels are really teachings and interpretations rather than biography, the organization of the study of Jesus Christ around the major issues which he and his interpreters faced, such issues as are pertinent today, would probably be more vital than merely to attempt a chronological story. All of these suggestions are given simply to illustrate the necessity and possibility of the reorganization of the Biblical material for teaching purposes. Each teacher will, of course, work out his own reorganization of the material.

It must be evident that if the teacher is to be able to do this work of reorganization, he must have a real grasp and under-

standing of the Biblical material in relation to the periods in which it was produced and in relation to the Biblical editors and writers. Therefore thorough-going courses in Old Testament and New Testament Introduction and in mastery of the various writings are important in his preparation. A difficulty in Bible teaching has developed, however, because sometimes teachers have seemed to consider that their function in teaching the Bible to undergraduates was to reproduce courses of the type which they took in their graduate study. Such courses may be suitable for very advanced students, but they do not represent the best approach for introducing college and high school students to the Bible. Perhaps part of the blame for this failure to reorganize the material for teaching and preaching purposes belongs upon the theological seminaries and other graduate schools. They have given far too little attention to helping their graduate students reorganize the material for these purposes.

What has been said about the Bible would apply to all teaching of religion. The problem in Church History, for example, is the same as in teaching the Biblical history. It should be organized around living problems of the present rather than be an attempt to give an orderly chronology of events. The same can be said of Comparative Religion. The living religions represent answers to basic human problems. The study of these religions should be organized around those problems which are living for the students, and the solutions of other religions compared, and these solutions compared with those of Christianity. Only thus can there be real understanding and appreciation of these other religions.

The discussion has been weighted thus far on teaching which has as its main purpose understanding and appreciation of religion. But another main purpose of teaching religion should be considered; viz., helping students to come to a religious experience

and faith of their own. Teaching for understanding and appreciation makes an indirect contribution to a personal religious faith, but the teacher of religion has a more direct obligation.

Protestantism<sup>1</sup> has given a unique place to the Bible as a guide to the individual in faith and practice. The purpose of teaching of the Bible of this type is to help students find the answers to their own ethical and religious problems and to work out a faith and practice for themselves. Both the possibilities and the limitations in the use of the Bible in this way should be recognized. The Bible can be used for this purpose only on such problems of faith and practice as are adequately dealt with in the Bible. It must be freely admitted that there are many problems facing college and high school students on the solution of which very little light can be obtained from the Bible. It is true that even for these, a real grasp of the Biblical points of emphasis will give a perspective and point of view from which to attack the problems; but the student and the teacher must recognize that they are discussing their own ideas of what are the implications of the Biblical points of emphasis rather than utilizing Biblical material in which the meaning of the principles is made clear. There is however, a great range of present-day issues of faith and practice on which more direct help can be secured from the Biblical material.

In using the Bible as a guide to faith and practice, it is necessary to select that material in which the basic issue is the same as that being faced by the students, even though the circumstances were different. Just as thorough historical study is necessary in using the Bible as a guide to faith and practice as in the attempts to recapture the Biblical experiences. The practice of many ministers of using an isolated text on which to hang their own ideas or the method followed in many Sunday School lessons, where isolated texts or passages are used entirely apart from their context or the his-

torical situation, is false use of Biblical material. The use of a single passage for the lesson, even when it is studied in its historical setting, is not enough. No one today would be willing for his point of view upon any important question to be determined by a single incident. If, for example, we want to get help from the interpretations of the life of Jesus on the question of war or race, it is necessary to study all of the pertinent material in the historical setting not only of Jesus' life but also of the time when the interpretations of what he is said to have done and taught were made. This requires a study of the records from the point of view of the problem being considered. The easy manner in which the Biblical teaching on a major present-day issue is sometimes tossed off in one lesson is a travesty on the use of the Bible as a guide to the solution of present-day problems.

But even when a thorough type of Bible study is followed, there is a distinct limitation in the use of the Bible for help on present-day problems. Practically no help can be secured for most of the problems on the exact course of action to be followed. The circumstances in Biblical times were so different from those of today that the consequences of solutions followed are of little help as compared, for example, with experiments in Christian living under modern conditions. To illustrate: it seems clear from the Biblical record that Jesus refused to join with the revolutionary party which wanted by military means to throw off the Roman yoke. It seems clear also that the primitive church counseled subordination to the government then in control. But we cannot say surely from these facts that Christians in what was Czecho-Slovakia and in other conquered countries of Europe, like Norway, Holland and Belgium, should yield allegiance to the Nazi regime and that their efforts to sabotage their conquerors are unchristian. What can be secured from facing present problems with the help

of the Bible is perspective, point of emphasis, viewpoint with which to solve the present problem. We come from such study to understand and feel the Christian values which must be considered, if any solution is to be Christian.

If all that can be secured from the Bible is principles to be used in the present situation, the question will be raised: Why then insist on this thorough historical study? Some do indeed deny the necessity of taking an historical approach in the use of the Bible as a guide to faith and practice today. They say that the Bible contains eternal principles, pertinent in every age and under all conditions. But there can be no certain grasp of the meaning of the Christian principles except as one is willing to study the efforts to embody them in the human scene. Principles apart from the situations in connection with which they were enunciated are dead words. Indeed, the result is often worse than this. When principles are taught apart from the events in connection with which they were given, those hearing the principles read into them current ideas of the meaning of those principles. As a result, the Bible does not become a basic criticism of present un-Christian practices, but tends to be used as the sanction and confirmation of current decencies. In the Biblical record, principles are given as the reasons for the criticism of certain courses of action or as the justification for actions or attitudes followed or proposed, and cannot be understood apart from the events in connection with which they were enunciated. Therefore, historical study of the Bible is necessary, if the meaning of the Biblical principles is to be understood. Even to understand them in relation to one problem, such as that of war, does not mean that there is necessarily understanding of their meaning in relation to other problems, such as race.

It is only as one comes to the Bible with concern about and understanding of his

problem; and then lives in the Biblical record of past efforts to solve the problem long enough so that the points of emphasis come to take on meaning and life; and finally attempts thoughtfully and prayerfully to find the course of action which will most conserve and the least deny the Christian values which he has come to understand and of which he has become convinced, that the Bible is a guide to faith and practice. The process, however, is not as simple and orderly as this brief summary would seem to imply. There is in fact a certain inter-relation between the present problem and the Biblical study, a going back and forth from one to the other as the study progresses.

Another and related area in which the teacher of religion can be of help to students in working out a meaningful personal faith is that of the philosophy and ethics of religion. It was suggested in the discussion of the nature of Christianity that the Christian experience and interpretation have been worked out in relation to current situations and problems. Significant developments have taken place whenever the Christian religion came in contact with different and sometimes conflicting ideologies, and some adjustment had to be made. We are in one of those significant periods when the Christian religion is having to make some kind of adjustment to new data and conflicting ideologies. The conflicts facing students at the present time are often precipitated by their college or university studies, but they represent the problems facing all of us. They are in two major areas: one area is that of social arrangements, the way we shall live our lives together as human beings, and the problems have to do with the relation of the Christian religion to democratic and totalitarian ideologies on all levels of experience. The other is concerned with beliefs about God, and has to do with the relation of the Christian religion to the



developments of our age in the sciences—physical, social, and technological. If the class in religion is to be of help to students who are in the midst of these conflicts, it is not enough to teach the tenets of the Christian faith as they have developed in Christian history, however meaningfully this may be done. This leaves the student with conflicting philosophies and without any basic religious integration and direction for his life. It is necessary to deal directly with these conflicts and help the student in working out some kind of basic integration in his experience.

In the realm of social relations, there meet in the life of students two streams: one coming from the Kingdom of God hopes in the Hebrew-Christian tradition, and the other the product of the Enlightenment, working out in our life in the freedoms guaranteed for the individual in democratic forms of life. With the increasing complexity of our corporate life, the democratic forms have not proved sufficient to meet the problems of corporate functioning; so there has reappeared a totalitarian emphasis upon the need of dictatorship in one form or another in order to secure the solution of social problems. The problem of the Christian religion in the realm of social relationships is how to work out the ideals of the Kingdom of God in the realm of social relationships on all levels from the family to international affairs. The Kingdom of God hope grew up in a period of much more simple relationships than at present. It was developed also before the added knowledge that has come out of history, sociology, and psychology. The question facing students is whether or not the findings of the social sciences and the lessons out of the experiments with democratic and totalitarian forms of social arrangement can be utilized and integrated with the ideals and hopes of the Kingdom of God. There is no assumption in this that the Kingdom of God is to be identified with any human form of social arrangement or

that it can be realized fully in human affairs. But there is an assumption that it is the function of the teacher of religion to help students in working out the ideals of the Kingdom of God in relation to the human conditions they face.

The basic conflicts in regard to belief in God grow out of an advancing science. The Hebrew-Christian conceptions of God and his functioning in human affairs developed in a pre-scientific period. They are posited upon a God of direct action. The services of public worship and the private prayers of perhaps a majority of Christians are phrased in terms of relationship to this kind of a God. This is the type of Christian faith in which many students were brought up. When students enter college, and even in high school, they come in contact with what seems to be an entirely different set of assumptions in the scientific accounts of the universe and of social responsibility. Since the scientific descriptions are based upon more accurate data than were available in Biblical times of what this universe is like and how it functions, they would seem to furnish data which must be taken into account in experiences and interpretations of God, for if this is God's world, then these manifestations which science describes are manifestations of God. The question is whether or not the basic beliefs about God which have characterized the Hebrew-Christian religion can be integrated with that which science has discovered as to what this universe is like and how it functions.

It is seen, therefore, that the focus of the problem of teaching religion is found in the necessity of making some kind of adjustment between the Hebrew-Christian tradition and current conceptions of social relationships and of the universe. It is the belief of those who take a functional approach that classes in religion may be creative experiences, if the teachers of religion are willing to work with their students for the integration of the Hebrew-Christian

faith with the new knowledge and experience man has attained. It involves the re-interpretation of the Christian religion, as it has been reinterpreted in other periods of Christian history.

This viewpoint has direct implications for the training of the teacher of the Bible and of religion. Up to the present, it has been assumed that he needed to be trained only in the Hebrew-Christian tradition. Knowledge of the Bible, Church History, Systematic Theology, and Christian Ethics were his equipment. But if this functional viewpoint is accepted, then the teacher of religion must be trained also in the fields involved in the integration of the conflicts the student faces. It is a notable fact that

the great philosophers of more recent times have been at home in more than one realm of human knowledge. The work of those who were theologically trained before they entered upon some so-called secular field of teaching is significant. Acquainted with the Hebrew-Christian religion and also at home in their field of specialization, they are able to be of help to students who are facing religious conflicts far better than those who are trained only in the religious or the so-called secular field. Teachers of religion who would be of creative help to students in this integrating process will need to join with their study of the Hebrew-Christian religion, special study in fields where the conflict between religion and current ideologies are focused.

# The Historical Element in Christianity

WALTER M. HORTON

## I

CHRISTIANITY IS historical in at least two senses: (1) it drives toward a historical goal, and (2) its message takes the form of a historical narrative, an "old, old story."

(1) Not all religions drive toward historical goals. For the mystic type of religion that has generally prevailed in India, time is a wearisome meaningless round, the "wheel of rebirth", and salvation consists precisely in *escape* from history. The Buddhist temples and pagodas which add so much to the loveliness of the landscape throughout the Far East are not meant to be light-houses to guide men on their way toward distant historical goals; they are meant to be houses of refuge to which men may repair when disillusioned with life, sick of the social struggle, and hungry for the peace of a timeless eternity. The cryptic smile on the lips of the great stone Buddhas is half-compassionate, half-humorous: compassion for the poor victims so feverishly revolving the wheel of life like slaves in a treadmill; humorous contempt for the utter futility of the whole historical process. The way of salvation, for the Orient, does not lie onward and forward along the plane of history, but up and out into the Great Beyond that is impervious to time and change.

Christianity belongs to quite another type of religion, *prophetic* rather than *mystic*. Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Islam belong to this same type. Although all four of these prophetic religions have imbibed a good deal of other-worldly mysticism from their oriental or Hellenistic environment, their attitude toward history is fundamentally different. Mystical piety or monastic withdrawal, marked as they have been at

times in prophetic religions, can never mean the same thing in this context which they mean in the context of a purely unhistorical religion. They do not mean deliberate desertion and final escape from the social struggle; they mean temporary retreat, in order to recover strength and perspective for renewing the battle. For history, to all prophetic religions, is as William James would say, a "real fight", where great issues are at stake, and much depends upon the loyalty and valor of each participant. History is a drama with an intelligible plot, giving meaning to every new deed, while its dénouement still remains in suspense, giving urgency and responsibility to each new decision. Prophetic religions, so long as they keep the true prophetic spirit, are always pressing forward toward new historic objectives.

It may be asked whether the goal of prophetic religion is definable in purely historical terms; whether its ultimate outreach does not involve some super-temporal goal lying beyond all temporal goals. It is true that most prophetic religions hold out the hope of heaven to their adherents, and think of the whole historical process as rounding off at last into eternity. But eternity as they conceive it represents rather the *fullness* of time than the *absence* of time; and one's eternal destiny depends not upon despising all temporal affairs, but upon faithful and humane dealing with such obviously temporal matters as food and drink and neighborly help: a "cup of cold water" to the tired traveler, a friendly lift to the wounded man fallen among thieves.

World-weariness is not unknown in prophetic religion, but the most religious men were long ago defined by Zoroaster as "those that make this world advance"

(*Yasna* 30:9). John Macmurray is right: the idea of progress, though it be irreligious in some of its recent modern forms, could never have arisen save upon the soil of such prophetic religions as Judaism and Christianity. Greek thought, often credited with the paternity of this idea, was dominated to the end by the notion of eternal recurrence; it remained convinced, with Ecclesiastes, that "the thing that hath been is the thing that shall be, and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is nothing new under the sun" (*Eccl.* 1:9—a very Greek passage in the Hebrew Scriptures!). For faith in a really open future, hope of a really better world, we are indebted to the prophets of Persia, Arabia, and Palestine.

(2) Prophetic religions not only drive toward historical goals, they also think of history as the great medium of divine revelation, and when asked what they believe about God, they *tell a story*. For Zoroastrianism, *all* history is the vehicle of divine revelation, for in all events is seen the persistent conflict of Truth and Falsehood, Right and Wrong, Light and Darkness. This does not cease to be true for the other prophetic religions; they all see God at work in the whole historical process; but they find the clue to the meaning of universal history in *specific chains of exceptionally revealing events*, to whose memory they cling with what Sholem Asch calls "obstinacy of recollection."

Judaism to this day obstinately recalls the story of God's covenant with Abraham, the Egyptian bondage, Moses the deliverer and law-giver, the conquest of Canaan, the glory and decline of David's kingdom, the Babylonian captivity, and the re-establishment of the Temple and the Law under Nehemiah and Ezra. The sufferings of modern Jewry are set within that ancient framework of alternating tribulation and deliver-

ance; so they can be understood, faced, and borne.<sup>1</sup> The same chain of events is treasured up in the Christian consciousness, but to it is added the story of the coming of the Christ "in the fullness of the time", his ministry of teaching and healing, his sacrificial death upon the Cross and his glorious Resurrection, together with the Great Commission which he left his followers, to "make disciples of all nations"—memories which still largely account for the hopefulness and world-wide scope of the Christian movement.

It will be observed that the sort of history treasured up by historical religions is what Richard Niebuhr calls "internal history"; that is, history which is ours and which we believe in, as Lincoln believed in American history when he gave the Gettysburg Address, history which "calls for joy and sorrow, for days of rededication and of striving, for tragic participation and for jubilees."<sup>2</sup> It is *history-with-a-moral*, never to be equated with mere objective history on the one hand, or with everlasting moral principles on the other. Objective scientific history is not the foe of internal history, for it is of the essence of historical revelation that it actually happened, once upon a time, as the life of Jesus actually happened in the days of "Caesar Augustus" and "Pontius Pilate." But mere objective history can never take the place of internal history; for the events of objective history are finished, dead and gone, whereas internal history is the continual re-enactment of the past in the present—as at Christmas time we pray that the "holy Child of Bethlehem" may be "born in us today." This re-enactment is possible because there is a quality of universality in these events, a capacity for endless repetition with endlessly fruitful consequences; but it would never do to extract universal principles from the events, and then forget the events. No, it is necessary to remember these events, brood over them, philosophize about them, experiment

<sup>1</sup>See the noble book by Rabbi Ignaz Maybaum, *Man and Catastrophe*, (Sermons to Jewish refugees) London, 1941.



boldly along lines that they support; for there is a presence of God in them which is dissipated and lost when they are replaced by abstractions of any sort. Internal history is the collective memory of the ongoing religious community; if the Christian Church should ever lose its historical consciousness it would be like a man stricken with amnesia, wandering aimlessly because with the veiling of his memory he had lost all sense of direction and purpose.

Internal history is best expressed in mythological terms. That is not to say that prophetic religions can ever use mythology as mystical religions do, to body forth in a story that which never happened in time, and never *could* happen in time, because it is essentially timeless. Prophetic myths are *actual history, dramatized and simplified to bring out its enduring meaning and ultimate issues*. So the history of the kings of Israel and Judah is dramatized and simplified in the books of *Samuel, Kings* and *Chronicles*, to bring out the point that it goes well with God's people when they remember the Law and the Covenant, and ill with them when they forget. So also the story of the life of Jesus is dramatized and simplified in the Gospels, to bring out the point that he is the one foretold in Old Testament prophecy, sent and anointed to save his people from their sins.

The foundation of actual history is clearly visible in such passages of Scripture, and the labors of historical critics only serve to reassure us, periodically, that these were real events, and great events, *deserving* to be exalted into historical myths for the instruction of all posterity. The historical element is not so apparent in the mythology of Creation and the Fall, with which the Old Testament opens, and the Christmas myths, with which the New Testament opens; but I would venture to assert that such obviously *unhistorical myths* as these nevertheless contain *the distilled essence of historical experi-*

*ence*, and give precious clues to the meaning of the actual history which underlies the whole Biblical narrative. The prophecies and apocalypses with which the Old and New Testaments close are also made of historical stuff. They express historical wisdom in imaginative pictures of the future, which help us to act decisively in the present. Neither bare historical facts nor mystical allegories of eternal truth could possibly do for us what imaginative myths, based on historical experience, are capable of doing.

## II

Let us now consider the relationship between this historical element in Christianity and the philosophic and functional aspects of Christianity with which the other two papers have been concerned. The relationship will be clarified, I think, if we raise two objections against the historical interpretation of Christianity, one from the functional angle and one from the philosophic: (1) Can a historical religion be functionally flexible when it faces new historical situations? and (2) Can a historical religion ever escape from local and transient particularities, so as to become universally valid, as the philosophic ideal requires?

(1) We are all aware of the fact that historical traditions are sometimes extremely inflexible, especially when religious veneration has sanctified certain ancient words, ceremonies, beliefs, institutions, and made it seem an impiety to propose the slightest alteration in them. How unfortunate that religious veneration for the Book of Genesis should make it impossible for traditionalists to adapt their minds to the acceptance of new knowledge about the early history of the earth, and the descent of man. How tragic that faith in the literal veracity of the Book of Revelation should lead some contemporary traditionalists to face the crisis of the twentieth century with a millenarian

mentality unchanged since the first century. How urgent the necessity of overcoming the inertia which keeps each of our denominations inflexibly attached to its own special traditions, and unable to unite in the face of a common emergency.

One proposed cure for this traditionalistic hardening of the arteries which periodically threatens the life of historical religions is set forth in Professor Coe's *What is Christian Education?* Coe recommends that less stress should be laid on the *transmissive* function of Christian education, and more stress be laid on its *creative* function. With the contention that the Christian movement should come freshly to grips with every fresh difficulty that crosses its path, and think creatively about new social situations instead of trying to inculcate traditional maxims derived from other social situations, I am in hearty agreement. I might even go so far as to suggest that in every generation some school of Christian thought needs to make up its program and credo out of strictly contemporary materials—as Gerald Heard did when he wrote *The Third Morality*—in order that contact with the problems of each age may be vitally maintained. But I am sure that unless other schools of Christian thought, and prevailing practice in Christian education, maintain a strong emphasis upon the transmission of precious traditions and old, old stories, Christianity will become *less* creative, not *more*, in consequence of severing its connection with its prime sources of inspiration and guidance.

One of my psychological colleagues has been carrying on a series of experiments with monkeys whose frontal lobes have been dissociated from the rest of their brains by a surgical operation. At first it appears that such monkeys are not affected at all; for no one of their normal functions is destroyed by this operation, whereas if certain other sections of their brains had been dissociated, the function of sight, hearing or locomotion might have been elimi-

nated or badly crippled. Upon prolonged observation, however, it becomes evident that these animals have suffered a serious loss. They have lost the capacity to bring past experience creatively to bear upon the solution of new problems. There is still a carry-over from past to present in the form of stereotyped habits, and this is sufficient to solve certain problems of a somewhat mechanical sort; but what is missing is that very thing which in a human being would be characterized as creative imagination or adaptive intelligence. On the basis of such experiments, I think it might be said that a Christianity which became purely functional and utterly unhistorical would actually function less flexibly, less adequately, less creatively than one which continued to carry on transmissive education, and so faced the new contingencies of the present with the aid of great pattern-ideas derived from past history. *An unhistorical Christianity would be, so to speak, a Christianity lacking its frontal lobes.*

A certain student, after reading a good deal of John Dewey's philosophy, and jumping to some quick conclusions about its meaning, once wrote me a paper in which he declared that his philosophy of life was *not to have a philosophy of life*. Every life situation was so utterly different from every other life situation, he explained, that if you adopted any fixed principles or attitudes it only cramped your style, and prevented you from recognizing the uniqueness of each new event as it came along. *Pure experimentalism, or trial-and-error behavior*, he said, was what Dewey's philosophy required; i.e., to do in each life situation whatever seemed best at the time. The reference to "trial-and-error behavior" helps to define the meaning of this "pure experimentalism" somewhat precisely. The behavior of a rat in a psychological puzzle-box is known as trial-and-error behavior; but after the rat has bumped his nose a few times or got a few electric shocks, his behavior tends to become more effectively

intelligent *exactly in proportion to his ability to bring past experience to bear upon present problems.* A rat who remained a pure experimentalist, and never used his historical sense, would be an unusually stupid rat, learning nothing from his errors and his trials. May we not conclude, then, that extreme experimentalism in religion would fail quite as badly as extreme traditionalism—though of course in a different and opposite way—to solve the problem of adaptation to new circumstances. What is wanted is *such a use of historical revelation as is really relevant to present needs.*

(2) Let us turn then, to the philosophic difficulty about the lack of *universality* in historical religion. It is a very real difficulty, especially in such an age as this, when universality appears to be the *sine qua non* for any religion that hopes to deliver the human race from its present distresses. Our planet has become so small, and so unified in an external sense, that there is now a pressing demand, for the first time in world history, for spiritual unity on a planetary scale. All the great historic religions have to be re-examined in the light of this situation; and the first question that arises in the course of such re-examination is whether any historical religion can possibly develop into a world faith without sloughing off its local and provincial elements; *i.e.*, everything that ties it to a particular historical tradition. The pride and partisan bias of all racial, tribal cults of "blood and soil" obviously exclude them from the possibility of becoming the universal faith of mankind. Is it otherwise, we ask, with those so-called "universal" religions which, in spite of their humane and generous aspirations, continue to demand loyalty to particular historical leaders and particular historical traditions as the test of genuine discipleship? Can Christianity ever become truly universal while it continues to insist that all men must be baptized into the name of Jesus, a particular historical character who lived two thousand years ago?

Philosophic reflection can certainly do much to purify historical religions of their accidental and non-essential elements, and bring their universal elements into clear focus. It does so by enunciating general truths whose validity can be appreciated and tested by all men of good will, whatever their traditional background and special allegiance may be. It is unlikely, however, that universality in the religious realm can ever be attained by the process of abstract generalization alone. Actually, the process that has led us as close as we are to universality is one in which concrete historical movements and warm personal allegiances have played a decisive rôle. It was not through a gradual philosophic broadening and mellowing that Judaism became Christianity, but through a particular historical movement that was at first tragically divisive in its effect—"not peace but a sword." The Leader of this movement has now proved his ability to cross all sorts of national and cultural boundaries, and draw to himself all sorts and conditions of men—not imperialistically, but through love and humility. Those who follow this Leader see in him God's own universal justice and all-comprehending mercy, made flesh and continuing to work in our midst, even unto the end of the world. To renounce allegiance to such a Leader, in favor of some hypothetical spiritual center about which the world's life may be organized, would be to prefer the shadow of universality to its substance. In so far as the words and deeds of Jesus are merely relative to a past historical situation, it is of course idolatry and partisanship to take our stand upon them. But in so far as they are indeed the Wisdom and Power of God, drawn nigh unto us for our salvation, they must be re-broadcast by all to whom they effectively come home, precisely in the interest of the final religious unity of mankind. Loyalty to Christ is not the destruction of philosophic universality, but its concrete fulfilment.

The practical corollaries of all this, for

religious curriculum and method, can be very briefly stated. Christianity cannot be effectively taught unless its history and classic literature are fully and adequately presented. The mastery of objective historical data is not in itself enough, however. History must become *internal* history before it can be an adequate vehicle for the transmission of Christian faith. It tends to become internal when grasped in its dramatic or "mythical" significance, when treated as the embodiment and illustration of philosophic ideas, and when used as a storehouse of suggestions for the creative handling of contemporary problems.

The philosophic and functional treatment of the Christian faith is thus a necessary supplement to its historical treatment, and vice versa. While some courses in the department of religion should be predominantly historical, some philosophic, some functional, courses of each type may be improved by an infusion of the method and spirit of other types. Of the two courses I offer in the Oberlin College department of Religion, one (called "Development of Christianity") is predominantly historical, while the other (called "Christianity and Modern Civilization") is predominantly philosophic and functional. But as time has

gone on, I have been driven more and more into mixed methodology, in the endeavor to improve both courses. I spend a good deal of time in my historical course on live contemporary issues such as Anti-Semitism and Church Unity; while in the other course about half of my lectures are of a historical character.

That, I think, is the direction in which the solution of our problem is to be found. It must be so, if Christian faith in God is on the right track; a God revealed in history, decisively revealed in the character of the Christ, but pressing on to new victories in each new historic era, and aiming to comprehend his children in one universal Family. To desert the Great Tradition of Judaism and Christianity, just at this juncture when it is so violently assailed on every hand, would be treason to humanity. It would carry the human race back to the "beggarly elements" from which our primitive ancestors started out aeons ago. But the Great Tradition cannot be defended unless it is constantly renewed. Two excellent means of renewing it are to keep it constantly open to philosophic interpretation and criticism and to re-apply it constantly to the solution of new functional problems.



# Pfeiffer's Introduction to the Old Testament

REVIEWED BY JAMES MUILENBURG

PROFESSOR PFEIFFER has given us in this monumental work<sup>1</sup> the most complete, up-to-date, scholarly, and I think it is safe to add, the best introduction now available in the English language. It is not too much to say that its appearance marks a date in American Old Testament scholarship. It quickly invites comparison with the standard works of Driver, Steuernagel, and Eissfeldt. All three of these introductions will continue to be important for Biblical students, and Pfeiffer's book by no means renders them obsolete. Driver, as we all know, was often too conservative, though from many of his judgments, his summaries of scholarly opinion, his linguistic lists, and his amazing succinctness of statement we shall continue to profit. Steuernagel is especially fruitful for his own solutions to Biblical problems, while Eissfeldt, the most recent of the three is extremely important for his frequent summaries of previous investigation, his own critical views, his understanding and appreciation of literary form, and, in general, the inclusiveness of his treatments.

No American scholar has yet attempted to write a work of the range and thoroughness of Pfeiffer's. One recognizes before proceeding far that everything is grist for this scholar's mill. To be sure, most of us will discover omissions, some of them (as it seems to me) serious and almost inexplicable, but this is by no means so significant as the wide range of reading and scholarly background which the book shows. It is easy to be hypercritical in reviewing a work of this sort: one would have no difficulty in writing at length on what might seem the

shortcomings of the work. But this would be to approach the work mistakenly, for works of this sort always have the great value of stimulating thought and criticism. This is as true of Eissfeldt and Steuernagel as it is of Pfeiffer.

In general, Professor Pfeiffer occupies a fairly moderate position on most Old Testament problems. One has the sense throughout of a disciplined mind at work. He does not go to extremes on the matter of the prophetic experience; he maintains severe restraint on the fertility cult influence in the O.T. His textual criticism, where I have had the time to test it, is usually judicious and sane. History, comparative literature, and cultural background illuminate many a page. Pfeiffer has been deeply influenced almost throughout by his teachers, George Foot Moore and especially William R. Arnold, and if one is to be influenced by his professors (and who is there of us who is not?), he could hardly choose much better.

One reason for the freshness of this new introduction is that it does not hew too closely to the line of past methods. After three brief but informative chapters on the religious, literary, and historical interest in the Old Testament, we have a good chapter on the canon and an excellent one on the text (pp. 71-126). The section on the Pentateuch is marked by a fresh conception of the sources and their combination, an unusually full and discerning discussion of the origin and development of Hebrew law, and a generally satisfactory treatment of the poems embedded in the narrative materials. The following main sections take up the various books seriatim in the order of the Hebrew canon. The book closes with several indices, and a well classified bibliography of

<sup>1</sup>*Introduction to the Old Testament.* By Robert H. Pfeiffer. New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1941. xiii + 917 pp. \$4.00.

the Old Testament and its apocrypha and pseudepigrapha (pp. 849-884).

Perhaps the most striking general feature of this new introduction is its emphasis upon materials of foreign derivation. Isaiah 16-17 is drawn from a Moabite elegy, the former chapter quoted practically verbatim. Psalm 104, Pfeiffer states conservatively, is an echo of the Egyptian *Hymn to Aton*, giving expression to the solar monotheism of Ikhnaton, and Proverbs 22:17-23:14 is a "revised selection of the Egyptian maxims of Amen-em-ope." The original J decalogue of Exodus 34 and the Covenant Code are Canaanite as are also the civil legislation of the Covenant Code and parts of Deuteronomy. As we have learned from the writings of several American scholars, foreign sources are detected in the Joseph stories, but also in the P Code, and elsewhere. There is clear Greek influence in Ecclesiastes. But most interesting of all, since the foregoing views are familiar to all of us, is Pfeiffer's discovery<sup>1</sup> of what he calls the S (South or Seir) source in Genesis whose origin he traces to Edom. Similarly the book of Job is saturated with "Edomite philosophy", though elsewhere the Egyptian influences of Job are much emphasized. All this is exciting enough, but to these two Edomite contributions to the Old Testament should now be added Psalms 88-89 and Proverbs 30:1-31:9. All of these in their original form were written by Edomite sages.

It is easy for Old Testament introductions to deteriorate into cut and dried discussions of questions on higher criticism. Pfeiffer rescues his work from boredom in many ways, but in no way so conspicuous as in his happy faculty of comparison. Nowhere does this exhibit itself so pleasingly as in the discussion of the Books of Chronicles and the Priestly legislation and history. The treatment is really a most satisfactory achievement. Similarly, Jeremiah and the Psalms receive several very rewarding

pages. So successful is this method that one might have wished a more thorough discussion of the Books of Chronicles and the Psalms, especially in view of Pfeiffer's rather late dating of the Psalms.

This comparative method, which Matthew Arnold used to call the life-blood of criticism, frequently extends to literature outside of the Bible. Pfeiffer is well-known as a competent Orientalist, but he ranges about quite comfortably among other areas as well. He says some judicious things about J (whose stature, thank Heavens, he recognizes) and the *Iliad* and the *Chanson de Roland*. He compares S and Hesiod. Second Isaiah is the Milton of Hebrew poetry, while the author of Job is its Shakespeare. The former judgment does not seem penetrating to me, but it is interesting. Ezekiel and Augustine come in for some excellent comment (as does also Dante), while Theognis naturally emerges more than once in the discussion of the prophets.

The book is filled with telling sentences, and I must confess that in my first reading I was quite swept off my critical feet by them. I still find most of them extremely interesting. Here are a few taken quite at random: Joshua 15-19 is admirably styled "this ancient Baedeker". "Fundamentally J is a pacifist". Pfeiffer describes the "inspired and persistent Moses patiently overcoming his inferiority complex". The theme of S is Paradise Lost (one doesn't have to accept the source to reach the same goal). "Ezekiel is the first fanatic of the Bible". "Samson is a sort of irresponsible and uncontrollable Till Eulenspiegel or Peer Gynt". Pfeiffer's own religious attitudes and insights emerge here and there. At one point (p. 371) he says: "When a faith ceases to cry out defiantly *Credo quia absurdum* and becomes rational, its days as a vital, inspiring force in the lives of men are numbered". This is not new, of course, but it gives us something of the writer behind this encyclopedic volume.

I regret that it will be impossible to raise

<sup>1</sup>Cf. his brief article in ZAW, 1929.

the vast number of questions and criticisms that this volume poses. The following merely represent a brief list: Why is there nowhere a discussion of critical terms? Why is the evidence for the documentary view of the Pentateuch given us so indirectly and incompletely? Hundreds of critical emendations are cited, but seldom if anywhere is any reason advanced for them. It would have at least helped had we been given a brief discussion of the state of the text, above all in I-II Samuel. I must dissent sharply, I fear, with Pfeiffer's remarks on rhythm and metre, though I recognize the state of that subject to-day. The presence of liturgies in Micah, Isaiah, Habakkuk, and elsewhere is probably dismissed too summarily, as also are the contributions of Mowinckel on the New Year festival, the enthronement of YHWH, etc. His references to *philosophy* are for me unpleasant reading, and his use of literary terms like *legend*, *saga*, etc. is as confusing as most discussions of such terms are. Much that Pfeiffer says about wisdom is not as it should be, and his statement that

one line of Hebrew wisdom ended in the skepticism of Ecclesiastes, and the other lost itself, with Ecclesiasticus, in the orthodox piety of normative Judaism, is demonstrably mistaken as a familiarity with the intertestamental literature with its abundant reference to wisdom and the New Testament writings show. Pfeiffer's theory of an S document cannot be discussed here, though the importance of the phenomena to which he calls attention is recognized. That an *Edomite* document should have been added after P, however, seems to me in a high degree improbable.

This last paragraph is an attempt to emphasize again the singular value that a volume has when it stimulates our thought. It is not true, as one hears so often in recent years, that literary criticism has done its work. We have still very far to go. Almost nothing has been done in America toward an understanding of Hebrew literary style and sense of structure. Pfeiffer's book is one that every teacher of the Bible must read and understand. It will advance the cause of Biblical learning in America.

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## EDITORIAL

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### Teaching Religion In War Time

As we begin publication of the tenth volume of the *Journal of Bible and Religion* in a new and different kind of year, some statement of editorial point of view seems to be called for. We have therefore invited members of the editorial board and officers of the association to offer comments dealing in general with the new situation which has arisen and with the role of the teacher of religion in relation to it. It will be understood that none of these statements is intended to represent any "official" attitude of the Journal or of the association. We invite other members of the association to submit their views for publication in the Discussion column in forthcoming issues of the Journal. Since the editor-in-chief has asked others to contribute to this symposium of opinion, it is perhaps only right that he should begin with a statement of his own point of view.

The teacher of the Bible and of the Christian religion will have come to a decision about his own relationship to the present war and will be willing to declare himself when and as occasion demands. This decision will not be one hastily made, because it will be the crystallization of months or years of searching of mind and heart for the truly religious attitude toward modern total war. The position arrived at will presumably be not inconsistent with the general attitude expressed before Pearl Harbor. One's religion is one's whole way of life and cannot be donned or doffed with every change of the political weather. As Dante put it, "Be ye, Christians, not like a feather to every wind."

Different teachers of religion will have come to different conclusions. That is

to be expected, and differences should be respected. Few of them, we believe, will be able to adopt the light-hearted position of the "Happy Warrior," as a friend has recently described it, as if our country were today embarking upon a religious crusade. Some will, however, feel compelled to assume the role of "Unhappy Warriors", in the conviction that this war is a tragic necessity. Others will feel obliged to accept the label of "Unhappy Pacifists," pacifists because they can find no way of identifying God's will with war, but unhappy because in a world of total war the contribution of the pacifist may seem, on the surface at least, as insignificant and futile.

The teacher of religion in this hour, whatever his individual position, will particularly need to guard his line of spiritual communications. He will have to see to his source of spiritual supply. The conclusion to which he will have come will have been the result of spiritual wrestling, but the maintenance of this position, particularly if it places the teacher in a minority group, will require constant spiritual vigilance and waiting upon God. Different ways of cultivating spiritual resources will be found. Many individual religious leaders who have been forced to a position similar to that of the Society of Friends are identifying themselves with the Wider Quaker Fellowship. This is a fitting time for the revival of prayer fellowships, whether in churches, in homes, or on the campus. This is a period when we must not refuse but must rather seek "the waters of Shiloah that go softly." Or, to quote a modern prophetic voice, the teacher of religion may well say "Mine, O thou lord of life, send my roots rain."

The teacher of religion has today a sig-



nificant task to perform in the classroom. He will find that the subject matter of religion, particularly if it be the Bible, will come alive to him and to his students as never before. He may be surprised, even dismayed, to find in his notes from previous years such sentences as the following quotation from Moulton's *Jeremiah* (in *The Modern Reader's Bible*, ix,x): ". . . Jeremiah's lot was to fling himself directly against the ardent patriotism of his generation, in behalf of the righteousness that is above all consideration of country." Discussion of Jeremiah's view of the higher patriotism might well serve to guard students from such a self-righteous view of the present war as would, if widely enough held, prevent the establishment of a just peace. While not dodging the vital questions raised by the study of such challenging documents as the books of the Hebrew prophets, the teacher may well adhere closely to the historical approach to the Bible. Now if ever we shall be led into the "peril of modernizing Jesus" and the Bible. Therefore, we should be very careful to respect the spiritual autonomy of our students. They, too, have their decisions to make and we must not forget that they are closer to the actual fighting-war than are we. College girls have brothers and sweethearts being called to the colors. College men are facing the notifications of draft boards. Rigid respect for the historical method will guarantee respect for the truths of the Bible, respect for our own spiritual integrity, and respect for the spiritual autonomy of our students.

CARL E. PURINTON

*Beloit College*

In these dark days the role of the teacher of religion, as I see it, is as follows:—

To hold untarnished the ideals of religious devotion and scholarly integrity to which our lives are committed;

To maintain respect for honest differences

of opinion among lovers of truth and of God;

To give especially sympathetic understanding and practical religious help to students who have entered the military service or who are looking forward to it.

To place voluntary restrictions on our own freedom of utterance in the national emergency, while making no statements which we do not honestly believe to be true;

To interpret anew the abiding grounds for faith and love and hope—especially hope—in the real world in which most of our students will suffer more than we;

To make clear the universal nature and religious basis of social responsibility, love of country, and love of humanity, while seeking to overcome all racial, religious, nationalistic, and class prejudices;

To work and plan for a future world of peace based on social, political, and economic justice.

EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN

*Boston University*

In these days of trial, the Christian teacher may wisely identify himself with a vast company of prophets and martyrs of the long past whose vision and spirit reveal the values which are enduring and which point the way to a closer relationship with the processes of God. Not by methods of escape nor by the condemnation of other nations, but by the direct facing of our own failures economically, politically, and morally in national and international life can we expect to triumph over the flood of evil that has been unleashed in the world today. Self-centeredness, self-pity, and fear must give way in our individual and group life to an intelligent and keen devotion to those processes by which goodwill, justice, mercy, freedom and brotherhood are realized among all races, classes, sexes and ages in our own country. Whether we are pacifists or militarists both alike are called upon to rededicate ourselves to the unfinished task of

building a truly democratic society where men of good will predominate over men of prejudice and hate. Religious teachers continue to hold a strategic place in the education of youth. Supremely must we foster a faith that "moral values are inherent in the universe." Youth needs to learn that love and brotherhood are forces of God and particularly "that man is a partner in the enterprise."

EDNA M. BAXTER

*Hartford Seminary Foundation*

Students who are bewildered and insecure or who are shocked by crises into a new seriousness and sense of responsibility are more open than usual to religion. Bible study "comes alive" as students recognize that the Hebrews and Christians lived through crises very like our own and learned something about how to live, what to let go of, what to hold on to, how to interpret history so that they could hear what God was saying through it. The truths they learned are still steadying and challenging. Such subjects as God and the wrong-doer, nationalism and religion, God at work in history, the nature and ground of our trust in God for the future, how God's justice is shown, different interpretations of suffering, furnish centres of continual interest more genuine than usual as one works through the Bible with a class. Certainly the teacher of religion has a role—the only question is whether he can fill it.

MURIEL S. CURTIS

*Wellesley College*

It is of course obvious that the contribution of the religious teacher and leader can best be made in the moral and spiritual field. This involves viewing our task in the light of the Christian religion. In turn, this means turning to the primary sources of our faith as these appear in the Bible, and seeking to interpret them anew in the light of the present emergency. No ordinary faith is adequate for an extraordinary time. More

thought, more prayer, more devotion than ever are demanded of us. And we shall seek to win our students to a similar commitment.

In particular, we may well keep in mind one recent document, namely the so-called Atlantic Charter, with its eight points. Perhaps it will be the special task of the religious teacher to conserve and interpret this, and to make its terms more widely known. Certainly it will be tremendously worth while for us to do all that in our power lies to insure that we do not "lose the peace" by neglecting and contradicting the eight points as the Fourteen Points of President Wilson were abused. It will be a worthy and demanding task to insist in the face of war hatreds that the only realistic peace is a generous one.

GEORGE DAHL

*Yale University*

I agree most heartily with the convictions expressed by Mrs. Paton in the presidential address relating to our responsibilities as teachers of religion, and the unpredictable changes which lie ahead of us all.

I would add what I feel is a somewhat broader and, in some respects a more far-reaching concern, which might be called professional and even academic. It seems to me that we have a very real responsibility for preserving the place of the "humanities" in the curriculum of higher education in our country.

The tendencies are so strong toward the almost exclusive emphasis upon the natural sciences and the more technical social sciences (economics, government, etc.) that all else is de-emphasized almost to the vanishing point. The rush toward "practical" courses will doubtless be at the expense of those cultural or normative studies which do not directly prepare a man either to earn a living or to find a place in defense work of a military nature. The problem strikes rather deeply into the quality of edu-

cation offered by our colleges. It may be only a temporary eclipse for the normative subjects, but it comes at just a time when it would seem most imperative for students to be offered more than mere training for technician jobs—when they should be aided in the achievement of balance, perspective and the enrichment of the inner resources by which to live. Surely it is a time when we need to insist more strongly than ever that what we stand for and teach is of such importance as to deserve recognition as basic, and not be forced out either intentionally or inadvertently.

JOHN W. FLIGHT

*Haverford College*

The Bible taken as a whole is the history of God's dealings with people very human and in many ways akin to us, as they lived through crisis after crisis. It shows clearly, in the perspective given by historical distance, examples of the nature of military aggression and totalitarianism, of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of military resistance to the forces of darkness, and the divine answers to the problem as distinguished from the human.

At the present time our increased need drives both us and our students to search these Scriptures for deeper understanding. It is *not* a matter of intensifying our propaganda for a religious faith stated in our own terms, however useful such statements may be to ourselves. It is not a matter of increased enthusiasm or eloquence; there will be less need than before of trying to interest or inspire our students. The reality of the Bible answers to the reality of our situation; we should be ready for new experience of it to come both to us and to them.

ERMINIE HUNTRESS

*Pendle Hill*

Religious leaders in general and teachers in particular should remember that the Jap-

anese attack on Pearl Harbor has not changed any of the laws of nature or morality, not even human nature. It has simply brought our countrymen into a grand show of unity against a common foe, but our students who go out to face the hazards of war and the obligations of future leadership must master a plan of salvation and a technique for the realization of the ideals of the kingdom that have not seriously changed. Our alertness to the moral and spiritual problems of this generation should not trick us into failure to understand that our God is still a God of history and of mercy. Our fundamental task has not changed, but the need for our ministration has become far more obvious.

ALBION ROY KING

*Cornell College*

"Our country (as Plato wrote in the *Crito*) is more to be valued and higher and holier than mother or father or any ancestor, and more to be regarded in the eyes of gods and men of understanding. . . . And if she leads us to wounds or death in battle, thither we follow as is right." This eternal principle, which has never been stated more simply and unanswerably, is of course no less binding upon the teachers of religion in American schools and colleges than to all other patriotic Americans. Nevertheless, the teachers have, in the present national emergency, an added responsibility: they must not only dedicate themselves to the defense of their country from military attack and to its triumph against its foes, but they must save its soul by preserving its noblest spiritual treasures. "For what shall it profit a man [or a nation], if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Shall we, the teachers of religion, declare a moratorium on the things of the spirit during the war? Shall we take off "the whole armour of God" to put on the whole armour of man during the crisis? Shall we

shelve the Sermon on the Mount for the duration? Such a choice is of course the popular one, indeed the instinctive one. For not only does the fury of war tend to bring primitive human brutality to the surface, but such a submergence of our better nature is actually advocated in the interests of victory.

The alternative is for us to remain true to our deepest selves, to fulfil our task by telling our pupils in season and out of season, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and its righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Unless we, in our generation, keep alive in the youth the ideal of "peace on earth, goodwill to men" proclaimed by the heroes of faith in the past, the fair vision unfolded before us by Senator James J. Davis, of Pennsylvania, in a recent radio address, will be but a tragic delusion:

"When the bombers have ceased their errands of death, and the time has come for the representatives of the warring nations to meet around the conference table, there will be but one book which will hold their common respect and confidence. That book will not be 'Mein Kampf.' It will not be a volume of Shakespeare. . . . That book will be the Bible—a common bond of counsel and inspiration among all men. It will be the Bible that holds the Sermon on the Mount and the life portrait of the Prince of Peace."

ROBERT H. PFEIFFER

*Harvard University*

The teacher of religion in the present crisis owes it to himself and his students to see clearly that "in quietness and confidence shall be your strength," and keep ever before them the question, "what shall it profit a nation if it win the war and lose the peace?" He should see too that the expressed aim "to lick hell out of Tokyo" is only the modern version of the old *lex talionis*. The teacher of religion must refuse to become hysterical, refuse to hate and refuse to acquiesce in the abrogation of our liberties.

There is no reason to think that there would be any marked difference between an American and a German brand of Hitlerism or that "it can't happen here."

MARY E. ANDREWS

*Goucher College*

Never have I felt so deeply challenged by the significance of our task as teachers of religion to college youth as now. We have the privilege and responsibility of working with those in our population most immediately and seriously affected by the present hour. It is our job to help them to see beyond the immediate to the long-range values in terms of (1) building their own personalities for life beyond the war, (2) setting their social vision to the peace of the new world which must follow the war, (3) guiding their developing philosophy of life by the insights and characters of the religious geniuses of all ages who have risen above human strife and personal suffering to majestic eternal vistas. Such objectives indicate the importance of our techniques: (1) intensified search for the eternal values in the Bible and other religious literature, (2) frank, but not propagandistic, discussion of contemporary issues in the classroom when appropriate, (3) increased use of friendly personal counseling.

The personal religious living of the teacher of religion is particularly significant now, not only as to the examination of his own inner springs of conduct, but because he must be a leaven among colleagues and students nervous and distraught by the present emergency. As never before he must exhibit the virtues of friendly cooperation with colleagues of widely variant views, and quiet confidence and poise in his own spirit, the evidence of intimate fellowship with the Divine. Truly, now, if ever, he must be *teacher of religion*.

CHARLES F. KRAFT

*Albion College*



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## BOOK REVIEWS

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### Philosophy, Theology and Religion

*The Inner World: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Christianity.* By JOHN WRIGHT BUCKHAM. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1941. xxvii. 292 pages. \$3.50.

Professor Buckham has earned the right to be called one of the Nestors of American personalism, although he will have to divide the title with Albert C. Knudson and Ralph Tyler Flewelling. *The Inner World* is the distillation of his life's thought and work. It is mature, comprehensive and constructive.

The plan of the book indicates the range of its thought. In Part I, The Members of the Inner World, we find explanations of the nature of self and person. In Part II, The Structure of the Inner World, experience, interpretation, expression, and truth are discussed. In Part III, The Source of the Inner World, problems of religion, theism, revelation, and history are treated. In Part IV, The Expansion of the Inner World, there is an especially interesting account of the recovery of thwarted and shattered selves, the perdurance of persons, the expanding personal environment, and the vanquishment of evil.

As is evident, we have here a rugged and unrepentant liberal, who knows of the vogue of sin and pessimism in current thought, but whose attitude toward sin and sinners resembles that of Jesus more than it does that of Paul. His failure to follow Kierkegaard and his mood cannot be ascribed to ignorance, for he faces the Dane's thought at several points; not ignorance or shallowness, but profound conviction leads Buckham to a more positive and ethical view of life. He faces the facts of evil; this does not mean that the reviewer is in

full agreement with Buckham's treatment, which should be more thorough on the theoretical side than it is. It does mean, however, that Buckham is no blind optimist. His final note is one of hope and action rather than of contrition or mere submission. In this, I think, he is right. Confession of sin can never be a Christian's last word, nor a feeling of guilt his chief gift from God.

In this book the reader will find a clear and helpful statement of many of the contributions of personalistic philosophy to our understanding of the Christian religion. The book is not, and does not aspire to be, a full treatment of epistemology or metaphysics and there is no systematic attempt made to consider alternative positions. The method adopted makes it possible to offer a unified and helpful picture, even if not one that would necessarily persuade an unbeliever. Among the merits of this book are its lucid style and the use made of the exceptionally wide and varied reading of the author. The constant stream of footnotes is fascinating, and he who does not read them will close many doors which the author has invitingly opened for him. The definition of experience as meaning (vs. Dewey) human experience (and not the whole of nature), and as meaning (vs. Kant) the whole of consciousness (including reasoning as part of experience), avoids many verbal quibbles and unifies the data of philosophy. One could wish that this excellent chapter had been longer. Also the treatment of subsistencies as ideas (vs. the neo-realists) is provocative and helpful.

It may be doubtful whether Buckham is wholly right in agreeing with Mr. Dooley's pragmatism, that "a truth that's layin' off ain't half so thrue as a good worrikin' lie."

After all, even if you don't love your neighbor, it remains true that you should, Mr. Dooley and Mr. Dewey and Mr. Buckham to the contrary notwithstanding. And a lie that brings results is still a lie. It is true that a truth that's "layin' off" isn't being tested, and therefore its truth is not being made evident. But truth is true, no matter what we do about it. In fact, there is little we can do about the truth, except to be for it or against it. Nothing we do or don't do can change it—except, of course, the truth that describes what we happen to be doing. Buckham was entrapped for a moment by the pleasant pragmatist.

The reviewer is happy to find a writer who takes Paul's idea of the spiritual body seriously. How one can entertain any concrete conception of immortality without it is not clear, but many seem to have thought they could. Such persons should read Buckham's Chapter XV with care.

Especially interesting is the classification of personalists into psychological (including Allport, Stern, Stolz, and others), ethical (Kant, Scheler, Maritain, etc.), metaphysical (Eucken, McTaggart, Royce, Calkins, etc.), theistic (Berkeley, Howison, Ward, Leighton, etc.), mystical (Schleiermacher, Bergson, Hocking, Kierkegaard, R. M. Jones), scientific (Smuts, Eddington, Planck, etc.), and Christocentric (Ritschl, Flewelling, McConnell, Knudson, Ferré, etc.). This classification raises many questions, but it is instructive in showing the breadth of the personalistic movement.

It is regrettable that in so good a book there are so many typographical errors. Most Greek words are wrong. On p. 53, note 9, along with a Greek error there appears the standard error, "Nichomachean." On p. 117 *Courage* is mentioned as a Platonic dialogue, where the *Laches* is plainly meant. On p. 180 Molinowski does work for Malinowski. In fact, many proper names suffer a sea change; we find McConnel and Neibuhr and even Cae

(Coe?). Many of these errors are doubtless signs of the effects of priorities and "defense" on printers and others. Who has not suffered? They mean that the principle of *caveat emptor* applies even to books of the best publishers as it has not done in the past.

Buckham's *Inner Life* is well worth reading, and is especially to be recommended to Christian believers who have become confused in their bearings.

EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN

Boston University

*Man's Vision of God.* By CHARLES HARTSHORNE. Chicago: Willett, Clark, and Company, 1941. \$3.00.

This book offers a challenging invitation to religious students who wish to think without mental shoddiness: its theme is *organic theism*. I advise careless "philosophers" or ministers fishing for homilies to spend their money for books elsewhere; however, if any of these men feels repentant of shallow thinking in these very serious days and wish to awaken to "what theism is all about," here is the book for them to study. And parts of it do require study! Most of its ideas have been told by men from Leibnitz to Whitehead; here, however, the ideas of organic theism are explained with "exactitude, logical rigor," yet avoiding too polysyllabic theological terminology. This book is the second of a trilogy by Dr. Hartshorne, following *beyond humanism* (1937), and preceding *the universal orthodoxy* (soon to be published).

The modern thinker faces three types of theism: (1) A Being in all respects perfect (Absolutism); (2) relatively perfect Being (Finite-Infinitism); (3) finite Being (Atheism or Finitism). Hartshorne accepts the second type of theism because it conforms to experience and is "not so absurd" as Absolutism. He supports his viewpoint by analysing cosmic organism, God and the

beautiful, God's self-creation, God and righteousness, God as the subject of all change (the cosmological argument), and God as the necessarily existent (the ontological argument). After rigorous inspection of these problems, Hartshorne concludes "if the theistic arguments are sound, no one is really without faith in God. . . . The coincidence between world-intuition and God-intuition, secular and religious experience, is the only proof for God. We must trust our idea of what God is because it proves to be simply the full explication of what all our general or cosmic ideas imply; the only possible argument for God must show the doubt of God is doubt of any and all truth, renunciation of the essential categories of thinking."

This type of theism views man as a microcosm, God as a macrocosm; man's mind is to his body as a sort of indwelling of God; the analogy presumes that the world is God's body "to whose members he has immediate social relations." While the world body is not perfectly harmonized, its organic unity nevertheless shows a single plan in which God's love has sympathy for all forms of life in their joys and sorrows. God is a being who suffers with his creatures because God has nowhere to hide himself; "the cross is a sublime and matchless symbol of this." Such a cosmic symphony requires no less a theme than God's love!

God's love and sympathy are supplemented by his purposive intelligence and power. Men's free choices may limit God, but never destroy him; "men with free will can never reduce God to solitariness." God is limited within his structure by a quality akin to sensation, "that aspect of experience which is neither thought nor volition, neither meaning nor action, but qualitative feeling." To cooperate with God diminishes his limitation in the world. Such cooperation, however, must be defined via religious love which is "action from social awareness toward the perfect social appreciations of

God." The microcosma love one another in their act of loving the macrocosm (God)!

It is hard for me to pick flaws with the logic of this book, because I have been thoroughly devoted to a similar viewpoint since the days I quit flirting with anti-theistic humanism. Perhaps I should merely add that philosophers who have tired of their amour for supernaturalism's prudery or humanism's beauty may find here an adventurous theism of lasting enticement!

THOMAS S. KEPLER

*Lawrence College*

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*Philosophical Foundations of Faith.* By MARION JOHN BRADSHAW. New York: Columbia University Press, 1941. 264 pages. \$2.50.

The subtitle calls it a contribution toward a philosophy of religion. In the last chapter the author reminds his readers that this book is "no massive constructive philosophical effort in which previous masters of thought are fitted into a final philosophy." It does deal with the religious aspects of the thinking of the founders of modern philosophy. It describes and evaluates the religious side of Seventeenth Century Europe, dealing with six great thinkers, and especially with their "personal religion and their views of Christ." The book's title promises too much. But the work is different, interesting, and scholarly. Specific references to sources reach a total of 108 for Leibniz alone. The six studies of modern philosophers are framed by an introductory chapter on the Seventeenth Century background, and by a concluding chapter on Philosophers and a Common Faith. Altogether, it is a fresh and worth-while effort "to look at Christianity through the minds of men who made a former century great." This precise undertaking was a new one, and it has been well done. Extensive quotations from the original writings enhance the book's value.

Descartes leads the author's gallery of the great. He calls him the Great Dualist.

He was the staunchest of all champions of the primacy of reason. Yet he did not force it in certain fields. He believed in the existence and supremacy of God. He believed in the life hereafter. And he was loyal to the Catholic Church. In matters of science and metaphysics the reason is competent. In the matter of the soul's salvation only revelation and God's grace avail. While Descartes did not lose his religion because of his method and spirit, many persons have since doubted because of the principles he exposed.

We may not here summarize the remaining philosophies as related to religion. The other thinkers were—Hobbes, the Materialist; Locke, the Empiricist; Pascal, the Mystic; Spinoza, the Rationalist; and Leibniz, the Individualist.

From his study, our author makes three observations which apply to the six philosophers. They all recognized some intellectual bonds between their primary philosophical views and their religious positions. Each was attacked by religious authorities and each waged partial warfare against contemporary ecclesiasticism. And, what is more important, in some ultimate sense each of these great thinkers professed faith in Christ. (Interestingly enough, our author affirms, no one of them was a married man, and no one of them was a professional teacher). Dr. Bradshaw refrains from trying to formulate a composite philosophy of religion based on ideas drawn from these several men. And he rightly concludes that "there is no one interpretation of Jesus which has a monopoly on saving and inspiring value." To readers who wish to make an excursion through the borderland between the thoughts of the founders of modern philosophy and the main ideas of the common Christian faith, this book offers competent and interesting guidance.

HORACE T. HOUF

*Ohio University*

*Contemporary Religious Thought.* An Anthology compiled by THOMAS S. KEPLER. New York, Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1941. 423 pages. \$3.50.

This is an excellent book with the good qualities, and few of the faults, of its type. "Sixty classic selections from a varied group of religious philosophers," says the jacket, and it may be added, in the main a distinguished group. Most of these names make up much of the reading lists of any of us who are teachers of religion. Obviously this book is too comprehensive in its content, too diverse in its points of view, and of necessity too much without a developing unity in its thought for any real treatment by the reviewer.

The work of the compiler could hardly have been better done. "Hardly" will leave room for a reservation or two that will not lessen enthusiasm for the whole. The range of the book provides a liberal education in religion for those who read and ponder it. Here are voices which speak for "the various schools of deism, theism, and humanism" (p. 8), and so constitute a record of the current religious scene. Such diversity should widen narrow outlooks, and while sharpening the thinking processes ought also to serve to further tolerance. This book provides in a single volume an admirable introduction not only to the study of religion but to many points of view now existent in our religious thought.

Some of the chapters almost any one could (or would) have chosen but if not every chapter, certainly every "Part" or section of the work abounds with evidence of the editor's excellent judgment. It is clearly sound in concluding to weight his materials toward the philosophy of religion and its problems rather than those of theology. There lie the fields of both interest and value. Moreover, no summaries or conclusions, no judgments of any sort are furnished. The reader must judge for himself. The editor uses no classifying labels



save in the Biographical Index. The risks of inadequate guidance are evidently preferred to the "safety" of any kind of "name calling." Let the truth speak for itself is the spirit of this editor.

Naturally, as is said in the Preface, this book "reflects one person's sense of evaluation," and despite its excellence, there are points of limitation. Many of us would have selected differently here and there, and that might have been for the worse, of course. Even so we would prefer another judgment occasionally. Some of these writings are hardly the classics in their field but that is not claimed for them. Nor are they all "the definitive writings" the editor would collect into a single volume. Some "not quite so influential or so oft quoted have been included." (p. 8) Such a category, classic or definitive, might call for some writings not to be found here. One thinks of Bertrand Russell's *A Free Man's Worship*, so readable as to be a classic. Perhaps, Max Otto's *Cosmic and Ethical Atheism* rendered the former unnecessary while adding values of its own. Further, some heed may here and elsewhere have been given the claims of the less familiar and accessible.

Furthermore, these well selected sixty writings are the current religious scene without Shailer Matthews, W. E. Hocking, John MacMurray, H. F. Rall, John Bennett, A. N. Whitehead, Edwin Lewis, A. C. Knudson, W. M. Horton, Jacques Maritain, and many others. Their points of view are largely included, but why are they omitted when some others are found here who would seem to have no such warrant? Why should John Baillie and his known emphasis on the close relation of religion and moral values not have been included? That emphasis is not absent from "the sixty" but some of us would have done it differently, of course. The line had to be drawn somewhere, usually it was very well

done, and the compiler would probably be among the first to admit that it had sometimes been drawn rather arbitrarily.

It will be superfluous to note that these selections may be used in studies of various sorts. For example, a good introduction to the study of mysticism may be had by following Heiler's article by the use of Wieman's *Methods of Mysticism*, Leuba's *Mystical Ecstasy*, and other writings by Margaret Montague, Rufus Jones, and Evelyn Underhill.

Just as the last stanza of the hymn usually deals with heaven and rest, so it has been the habit to devote the last chapter of a philosophy of religion to the discussion of immortality. With no personal aversion to it, quite willing to concede that it "belongs," able to make some use of the belief, the reviewer is still one of those who questions the uniformity of this procedure. He questions whether it has the importance and its discussion the value this implies. This book concludes this same way, and yet this last section has a character that wins its own way. It has at least two "Devil's Advocate" type of arguments (Potter and Leuba), and not to mention other distinctive approaches presents Streeter's treatment of the good and evil in Spiritualism. Some time ago a distinguished preacher friend of mine referred to spiritualism as the most important support for belief in immortality we have. That would have put this belief in worse shape than I had thought it to be. For better or worse, here is a discussion of this element in the picture. This variety of approaches justify this section as clearly as is true of any in the book.

This book is almost a shelf in its field, and no serious student of its theme can afford to neglect it.

IRWIN ROSS BEILER

*Allegheny College*

## History of Religions

*Man's Quest for Salvation.* By CHARLES S. BRADEN. Chicago: Willett, Clark & Co., 1941. 274 pages. \$2.50.

Dr. Braden is evidently bringing his fine insights and appreciations to bear upon the tasks of comparative religion. Heretofore, he has given his attention to the history of religions. In this field he has done great service to those of us who are working in the colleges by the way in which he has been able to present the essence of the world's living religions in not too technical terms. Now he is taking the next logical step and is helping us to see these religions in relationship to each other.

The comparison, of course, is not of the popular type which sets up one's own religion as the criterion and then judges all others in that light. It is rather the attempt to lift out an essential aspect of the total religious experience of man and then to inquire how that particular aspect is developed in each of the eleven living religions generally recognized.

The persistent element of the religious experience which Dr. Braden studies in this book is the end or goal toward which the devotees of the particular religion are striving. This element he calls "salvation" for want of a better term. There will probably be many objections to the use of this term by those who adhere to its traditional meaning. If one takes pains to understand the way in which the term is being used, however, there can be no real objection to it. The only objection which this reviewer sees in the use of the term "salvation" is that it includes too much. Yet there seems to be no better term to use to convey the idea to readers trained in the Christian tradition. It does seem, however, that when Dr. Braden is writing about salvation in some of these religions, he is discussing the religion in its totality. This all points to the fact that the "quest for

salvation" is close to the very heart of religion.

Dr. Braden has succeeded in maintaining a fine degree of unity in a work where it is easy to lose the way in details and in related problems. An introductory chapter presents an analysis of six different types of salvation ideas. Each of these is subdivided; as for instance, the idea of techniques for achieving salvation which is subdivided into salvation by works, salvation by knowledge, and salvation by faith or devotion. In the treatment of the eleven living religions this analysis of the six types of salvation ideas is kept clearly in mind. The concluding chapter classifies the religions on the basis of these principal ideas and at the same time calls attention to the fact that in most of the religions all of the ideas are found in some measure. Religion is a universal experience. Men everywhere and at all times strive for great ends or goals. On comparable levels of culture these goals are quite apt to be similar. Men make a common quest for salvation.

This review is not the place nor is the reviewer competent to make a critical statement about the content of the book. It is based upon sources accepted as reliable by students in this field. Dr. Braden is not given to over-statement or to generalizations upon little data. The form of the book is attractive and the style is inviting. It is scholarly but not overloaded with technical terms.

What Dr. Braden has done for the comparative study of salvation at the college level needs to be done for the other basic elements in the religious experience of man. He himself writes, "The comparison might have been made as to their [the religions'] concepts of God, their institutions, their ethical ideals, their literatures or other features." Let us hope that he can give his special abilities to the task of making these additional comparisons.

CHARLES M. BOND

*Bucknell University*

*Biography of the Gods.* By A. EUSTACE HAYDON. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941. 352 pages. \$2.50.

The reader who is looking for a list of the names of the "high gods" worshipped by various peoples at various periods of human history, and a handy account of some of the chief characteristics of these gods will find this book convenient and satisfactory. If, however, the reader, misled by the title, anticipates a reasoned and scientific account of the psychological and social influences through the interaction of which the various god-concepts have come to birth he will be seriously disappointed. In the introductory chapter Professor Hayden outlines his theory of the origin of the gods of human history in the phrase, "The emotional response to helpful natural forces was certainly the original source from which the gods arose." But there is no adequate presentation of evidence to support this assertion, and no careful study of the origin of the "emotional response" out of which the gods were born. Further on in the same chapter the author states that, "The most momentous event in the intellectual history of the pre-scientific age was the achievement of the twin ideas of soul and spirit" and goes on to state that the spiritualization of the gods could proceed with limitless possibilities open to them by means of these twin ideas. One reader, at least, has searched in vain for the analysis of the varied forces through which the "achievement" of these dynamic ideas was reached. Instead of a careful study of the actual "birth" in human thought of the desires, emotions and ideas that led to the creation of gods this creation is assumed and one gets the life-history of many different gods after their birth, a series of biographies describing the rise to influence and eventual decline of various deities. Moreover Professor Hayden becomes almost a myth-maker himself for his gods that "emerge" in unexplained ways, become personalities with dynamic wills, desires and thoughts of their

own; some become "the champion of the social values of a human ideal" others "refuse to be reduced to an abstraction."

Instead of such personalized biographies have we not a right to expect from Professor Hayden's announced purpose more exact and scientific accounts of the psychological and social influences conditioning the religious experience and an analysis of the changes in these influences that resulted in changes in the god-concepts that reflect them?

For those not well acquainted with the various gods of human experience, who wish a summarized description of the major characteristics of the more important gods the book will have considerable value. Such a mass of material is covered that it is not possible in a brief review to criticize the discussion chapter by chapter. The author has a high appreciation of Chinese ethical ideas; his chapter on the gods of China is one of his best. In discussing Christianity he rather fails to bring out adequately the relation of Christian ideas and social ideals to the cultural changes in European history, and, in more recent times, the stimulus that Christian thought has had upon ancient Asiatic cultural traditions.

It is unfortunate that a book in which one expects an objective and scientific account of the complex influences out of which the gods were born, in perplexing multitude, should have turned into a catalogue of the names of mysteriously emergent personalized deities.

LUCIUS C. PORTER

*Yenching University, China*

### Judaism

*A History of Jewish Literature.* By MEYER WAXMAN. Vol. IV: From 1880 to 1935. New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1941. Xiv + 1221 pages. \$5.50.

The wish expressed in this JOURNAL (vol. V, 1937, p. 148) by this reviewer, in con-

nection with the third volume of this great work, has been happily fulfilled four years later. With admirable diligence Dr. Waxman has brought his monumental work to completion and has thus provided us with the only detailed modern history of Jewish literature to our own time.

The final volume deals with the period 1880-1935, with two exceptions: for the literature of European Jews in Yiddish and in European languages the author begins with 1800, as also for the literature of American Jews in any language. Thus the main divisions of this book are the following: 1. Hebrew fiction, poetry, essays, criticism, and periodicals (1880-1935). 2. European Jewish literature in Yiddish and modern languages (1800-1935). 3. Jewish learning and thought (1880-1935). 4. American Jewish literature (1800-1935).

Extremely few living scholars are sufficiently erudite to appraise competently Waxman's encyclopaedic learning—and the present writer is unfortunately not one of them: he can only wonder at the vast range of the author's reading, from the most frivolous *belles lettres* to the most technical books on Biblical and Talmudic research, and to the most abstruse philosophical disquisitions.

While the reviewer has found the book interesting and informing—although his own ignorance was often ruthlessly exposed—he has read with particular absorption the chapters on "Bible exegesis and lexicography," "Talmudics," "History," "Philosophy," and "American Jewish learning." Here the important research of great Jewish scholars is summarized and evaluated. The value of this careful survey of recent research to the readers of this JOURNAL is obvious, although one might regret that the plan of the work did not allow the author to mention scholarly monographs published in learned journals, except occasionally. Incidentally, in his discussion of Biblical studies Dr. Waxman discloses a strong dislike and a deep mistrust in the methods and

results of "higher criticism." This appears in his remarks on A. B. Ehrlich, H. Torczyner, M. Bottenwieser, M. Jastrow, Jr., and particularly in his criticism of some of the conclusions of President J. Morgenstern; and conversely in his approbation of scholars defending the traditional views.

In a work intended for the general reader we should not expect exhaustiveness; but the omission of the Italian books of U. Cassuto (on Genesis) and D. Diringer (on ancient Hebrew Palestinian inscriptions), which appeared in 1934, is puzzling. Why is M. Jastrow's book on Canticles (1921) not mentioned together with his books on Job and Ecclesiastes? Nevertheless the book is a mine of information and is heartily recommended.

ROBERT H. PFEIFFER

Harvard University

### The Bible

*A New Heaven and a New Earth.* By EDWIN LEWIS. New York and Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1941. 248 pages. \$2.00.

Professor Lewis is a controversial apologist with a strong leaning toward traditionalism, squaring new findings in theological research as far as they will allow it with the old dogmas. The subject matter of his new book becomes clearer through the subtitle on the jacket: *The Biblical Basis of the Dream of a Better World.* It is virtually a discussion of the social teachings of the Bible. It is a controversy carried on with "those who are obsessed with the 'social gospel' and who have criticized the 'neglect' of it by Dr. Lewis and others." It is an exceedingly interesting discussion, with new bright original flashes, possessing not only warmth but at times even heat. It is a book that will pay reading, even if you cannot follow the author all the way. For the differences will appear relatively insignificant in the light of Professor Lewis' personal confession that the realiza-



tion of the ideal Christian social order "depends upon an intimate personal relationship to Jesus Christ in the depths of the individual soul." There can be no dispute on this point among Christians.

Reviving Platonic idealism, Lewis holds that the ideal social order with its basic concept of sacrificial love originated with God as the "pattern" seen on the mount. Moses hardly receives full credit for his fundamental contribution to the ideal social order in biblical teachings by the "desert ideal" with its democratic principles. This was first pointed out by the reviewer in his *Old Testament History* in 1915; worked out in detail by Prof. McCown in his *Origin of the Social Gospel*. This view of the influence of Moses is now well recognized by critics; but is ignored by Lewis. It is similar to the so-called "personal history" of Hosea which the latest Old Testament critics no longer regard as history or semi-history but a midrash or homiletic story. Fortunately Hosea's teaching of the love of God is entirely independent of what view you hold of the story. On the other hand, the author's estimate that Old Testament prophecy reaches its climax in the Second Isaiah's figure of the Suffering Servant and that he is the prototype of the world's supreme Sufferer is highly acceptable. The problem of evil in the world is discussed in connection with Zoroastrianism, the Book of Job, and apocalypticism, and comes to the conclusion that God must solve the problem of evil, destroying the kingdom of evil "by laying himself, in the Person of his Son, upon the altar of sacrifice."

In the New Testament prophecy and apocalypticism center in Jesus Christ. The old question whether the kingdom of God is a gift or a task (Gabe oder Aufgabe) is answered by Lewis that it is a gift; and talk about "Kingdom activities" and "bringing in the Kingdom" is not in accord with the Gospel representation. Family relations, the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, convey a clearer con-

tent than kingdom. These relations are the result of the redeeming death of the Son of God. Jesus' messiahship included deliberate choice on his part of apocalyptic and Suffering Servant elements. Jesus chose to die on the cross to save man from sin. His redemptive work brought about the possibility of man becoming born of the Spirit and a child of God; this is the design originated in Heaven to bring about the New Earth; and this is in essence the social teaching of the Bible.

ISMAR J. PERITZ

Wolcott, N. Y.

*Jesus As They Remembered Him.* By CHESTER WARREN QUIMBY. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1941. 220 pages. \$1.50.

Not since Glover's *Jesus of History* have we had such a fruitful and gratifying portrayal of the "remembered Jesus" as we have here from the pen of this former president of N.A.B.I. The reader of the present volume is often reminded of both the method and results of the former work. *Jesus As They Remembered Him* seeks, however, not merely to picture the historical Jesus in the sense of a photographed figure, a man walking the roads of Galilee, nor even to reconstruct the Teacher from His Teachings. This attempt goes much deeper, endeavoring to recapture the Man in every aspect of his inner as well as His outer life, and to make the impact of that Man's life and spirit truly felt by men of this modern world.

In order to discover the "actual" Jesus, Quimby feels that not only the historical man but also the experienced Lord, experienced both during and after his lifetime, must be considered. This, he says, gives us the total remembered Jesus, so great even during his mortal days as to necessitate a resurrection-faith to complete the character. "It is not by opposing the Jesus of Galilee to the Christ of faith, but by balancing them, that we discover the real

Jesus." In the main this all but impossible task of "balancing" is well done, though it requires a vivid imaginative sympathy with the early believers, some projection of present subjective experience and a reasonable caution against excessive inference. Now and then, but only occasionally, the reader feels that too great inference is made from rather scanty data. The preacher obviously speaks in some of the reconstructions and interpretations, but it is the preacher fully aware of the scholarly problems involved in his task. Though he pleads that "we have a right to infer for ourselves all we justly can—from what they recorded of him," yet there is no excessive use of this privilege.

Occasionally, too, the critical reader may feel that Gospel materials are employed somewhat indiscriminately, but this is because the author is convinced, as he says, that "below all the variations of the Gospels, their portrait of Jesus is a unity," and he believes this inner unity is due to the "ineradicable impress of Jesus' personality"; that an Unforgotten Figure is revealed under all the colorations and variations of the Gospel records. Because the Christ of experience is a part of this portrait, the New Testament sources are not limited to the Gospels; tribute is especially laid upon Paul and his experience of Christ. Even the achievements of Christ are not relegated to the first century or the New Testament, for his bringing of God near to man, and man to God, is relevant also to the present.

The book was written from a conviction that the relatively negative results yielded by critical scholarship in its research into the life and character of Jesus, do not give the final word. Therefore the endeavor is to demonstrate how much we really know about Jesus. The resulting portrait, showing twelve aspects (these form the headings of the twelve chapters), is living, convincing and consistent. The diction, more-

over, is simple, clear, effortless and impressive. From the first chapter in which the environment of Jesus is sketched in some detail with strikingly vivid local color, to the closing chapters on the Gospel and the achievements of Jesus, the interest of the reader is absorbingly held. It is a book to inform and inspire anyone, be he minister, teacher or layman.

JOHN W. FLIGHT

Haverford College

*Paul Becomes a Literary Influence.* By ALBERT E. BARNETT. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941. Xiii + 277 pages, lithoprinted. \$2.50.

This book is an important addition to the basic source-books in New Testament study, because it gathers between two covers all the pertinent first-hand data concerning Paul's literary influence in the first two centuries. The inspiration for the study was furnished by Professor Edgar J. Goodspeed's conception of the formation of the Pauline Corpus and of Ephesians as its non-Pauline introduction, most fully expressed in *The Meaning of Ephesians* (Chicago, 1933), and *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Chicago, 1937). Professor Goodspeed provides a foreword for the book.

The method of Dr. Barnett's study is to exhibit the Greek text both of the Pauline passages and of their parallels, to discuss any problems in connection with them, and to evaluate the probability of actual literary influence. Some degree of difference of opinion must be expected as to what constitutes literary influence, when the evidence ranges from actual mention of the letters, as in 1 Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, and 2 Peter, to a superficial similarity due only to chance or a common source. Professor Barnett has dealt with this problem by labelling the parallels "A", "B", and "C", indicating respectively practical certainty, high probability, and a reasonable

degree of probability. The table of results at the end of each study shows a preponderance of "C" over "A" and "B" even in the periods of greatest popularity of the letters. In addition to these signs of literary influence, many "instances of possible literary reminiscence" are cited by reference only.

Professor Barnett finds three periods after the publication of the Pauline Corpus with Ephesians as its introduction, about 90 A.D., as follows: (1) The popularity of the published letters, c. 90-115 A.D., reflected in Revelation, 1 Peter, Hebrews, 1 Clement, the Gospel and Epistles of John, Epistles of Ignatius, and Polycarp to the Philippians. (2) The subsidence of the popularity of the letters, partly due to their use by Marcionite heretics, c. 115-150 A.D., in James, Jude, Shepherd of Hermas, Barnabas, Didache, 2 Clement, Martyrdom of Polycarp, Apology of Aristides. (3) Return to popularity, c. 150-200 A.D., 2 Peter, Tatian's "Address to the Greeks," Justin, Melito Athenagoras, and the Pastoral Epistles. That this arrangement involves many knotty problems of dating goes without saying, but the great virtue of the book lies in the fact that it gathers the relevant data on the subject, and therefore supplies the material for its own correction, should that be necessary.

The increasing use of the lithoprint method of producing Greek books from typewritten sheets introduces a host of phenomena which remind one of the errors made in manuscripts before the days of printing; these lay an especially heavy responsibility on the modern *diorthōtēs*. While the Greek in this book is usually copied with great fidelity, it contains many slips which the proof-readers missed. The omission of a single letter, in *sesōmenoi* for *sesosmenoi* is found twice on p. 13 and three times on p. 172. A whole syllable is left out in *emisen* for *emisēsen* (p. 34) and *kekoi-mēnōn* for *kekoimēmenōn* (p. 91). The gross solecism *en . . . pneuma* is found twice on p. 24, and circumflexes on the antepen-

ults of *diōkontes* (p. 65) and *sōmatos* (p. 97), as well as quotations beginning with *gar* (pp. 110, 122) are inexcusable. Omega for omicron (twice in *epistolās*, p. 174), epsilon for eta (*thēriomachō*, p. 152), sundry misplaced rough and smooth breathings (many of them lexically significant), and similar mistakes will average one to a page in some sections of the book. The latter part of the book is relatively freer from them, but the last mistake found by the present reviewer is on p. 275.

"Paraenesis" and "paraenetic" are technical terms for moral exhortation which have recently come into prominence in New Testament study; if they are shortened at all, correct usage prescribes "parenesis", "parenetic", but Dr. Barnett has "paranesis" or "paranetic" regularly, e.g. pp. 31, 63, 84, 183, no doubt under the influence of the German "Paränese".

With the elimination of these irritating minor defects in another printing, this volume should take its place with the important contributions of the decade to New Testament scholarship.

F. W. GINGRICH

Albright College

*The Revelation of St. John.* By MARTIN KIDDLE. Assisted by M. K. ROSS. The Moffatt New Testament Commentary. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941. Xlix + 460 pages. \$3.50.

It is generally acknowledged that of all the books of the New Testament the one for which it is indispensable to have a commentary is the Book of Revelation. Its first requisite would be a clear translation. This is furnished by the well known hand of James Moffatt. The second requisite would be that its treatment and exposition be based upon a sane historical and critical exegesis. This is vouched for by both the series of which it is a part and the author of this volume. The series is now nearing completion, The Johannine Epistles and Thessalonians only still in preparation; and it

has achieved high water level among modern commentaries. It aims at popular service, in the best sense of the term. While based upon first hand investigation, it purposely avoids technicalities and the original Greek; and reads like a series of essays rather than a standardized commentary. The author is the incumbent of a large parish; and he was chosen because the editor of the series believed that the work of a parish is exactly the kind of preparation one needed for conveying the thought of a pastor's messages contained in Revelation, and was to be written by a scholar who was in close touch with the actual life of Christian people.

The result is most gratifying. Written in full view of the most recent worth-while literature on Revelation, the author pursues his own independent course. He discards the tendency to assume interpolations and defends the essential unity of John's message. This he conceives to be primarily pastoral. The keynote is in the letters to the seven churches of Asia: and instead of regarding the letters as foreign to the rest of the book and ascribing them to different authorship, as some critics are inclined to do, the author takes them as vitally integral and as giving the keynote, the pastoral keynote, to the book as a whole. The effect of this attitude is constructive; and it enhances powerfully the massive practical impression of the message.

Revelation, according to the author, is chiefly a tract for the times in which it was written. It does not aim to unfold predictively the history of the ages. The apocalyptic imagery was a contemporary and temporary literary form to be clearly distinguished and evaluated over against the permanent principles of the message. It consists in disclosing the unseen spiritual forces at work in the world in John's day. A mighty conflict was on between the Roman Empire, the Beast, materialistic and immoral, and the Church and its Lord, spiritual and

moral. Christians had to choose to which side to give their loyalty. Revelation is one grand, sublime, magnificently pictorial and dramatic appeal to Christians to be loyal to Jesus and His Church: for they possess abiding and everlasting worth while the other is destined to perish. Herein lies the abiding value of Revelation; and it is as vital and valid for Christians today as it was in the days of John. This makes Revelation a tract for our time also; and the publication of the Commentary timely.

ISMAR J. PERITZ

Wolcott, N. Y.

### Christianity

*The Nature of the Early Church.* By ERNEST F. SCOTT. New York: Scribners, 1941. Vii + 245 pages. \$2.00.

The appearance of another book by Ernest F. Scott is always an important event for Biblical scholars. *The Nature of the Early Church* is up to the high standards of Professor Scott's other books and merits especial attention because its subject is so timely.

At such a time as this the Church usually comes in for a good deal of lambasting by its critics for not having done something to prevent the débâcle. It is often asserted that, if the Church had preserved its original purity and retained the same zeal as that of the apostles, it would have so leavened the world that there would not now be war lords and arms magnates to thrust a modern war upon an unwilling world. There is a compliment in the criticism, in however harsh terms expressed, for it is implied that of all human institutions most should be expected of the Church.

Would a restoration of the primitive conditions in the Church prove a panacea for the world's ills today? Professor Scott's answer to such nostalgic yearning is that it is absolutely impossible to make the restoration and that those who engage in such idle speculation lack historical insight. The



primitive life of the Church could not be preserved for even one generation, much less for twenty centuries.

On the first page, Professor Scott points out the error, so often made by the uninformed, that the Church somehow came into being full-fledged to serve as a pattern for future generations. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Church arose spontaneously, being hardly aware of its own existence for a time, and only gradually added institutional features as need arose. It began as a community of believers held together by a fervent hope in the return of Christ to establish the kingdom. Fellowship was an important factor, but underlying this was a still deeper element, the new type of character which had been set forth by Jesus. It was for this latter reason that the earliest followers instinctively formed a group by themselves with forms of worship suited to the new direction given to their lives. Thus the foundation of the early Church was laid, but all was plastic. In time a real organization was formed and a beginning was made at defining Christian doctrine. Paul was the first to whom the epithet "ecclesiastic" can be properly applied since he provided the impulse to systematize the Church's faith and practice.

The beginning of an organization involved the loss of much of the earlier spontaneity. This was, however, a gain as well as a loss. Professor Scott's point all the way through the book is that to survive the Church had to express its faith through the channels which were available. Its character, therefore, necessarily underwent a change as it progressed into the world. In particular, the ethic of Jesus was recognized to be absolute in its demands, whereas in practice some paring down of the standards of Jesus was necessary. Here is the heart of the author's discussion and the answer to all who clamor for a more effective Church in our day. To make an ethic

work, there is always some compromise involved. Fortunately, according to Professor Scott, there is less tendency to compromise in the greater than in the less important matters. The Christian ethic is a goal to be striven for but is never reached. Men live in this world and, whether they will or not, they must come to terms with it. Through all of its history the Church has been realistic in pressing its claims, and so Christianity has been rendered workable for the mass of men, whereas, if there had been no adaptation, on account of its ideal character, it would have been quite beyond the reach of erring mankind.

It is folly, therefore, to refer to the original purity of the Church, as though by reviving such perfection our whole social order could be changed. The Church was never pure, but must be understood at each stage of its development as being limited by the environing conditions and as achieving something less than perfection. Unworthy and unnecessary compromises there have been, but, on the other hand, let the absolutists note well, if the Church had never tried to meet the world at all, it would long ago have passed into oblivion. Realism in meeting the needs of the world, however, has never obscured the essential character of the Christian religion. Its absolute ideal still shines brightly.

This is a wise book in which the author's well known scholarly capacities reach their full expression. At a time when so many fanaticisms are rampant, it deserves the most careful consideration.

WILLIAM SCOTT

*Randolph-Macon Woman's College*

### Archaeology

*What Mean These Stones? The Significance of Archaeology for Biblical Studies.* By MILLAR BURROWS. New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1941. xvi + 306 pages. \$2.50.

In a recent article on "The Next Task in

Old Testament Studies" in the *Journal of Religion* (Oct. 1941), T. J. Meek has said that the time has come, in view of the cessation of most field activity, for scholars to take stock of the great mass of archaeological material which has been uncovered, "to organize it, interpret it, and determine more precisely its bearing on the interpretation of the Old Testament." The present volume may well be considered as an attempt in a limited way to undertake this task for the whole Bible,—especially the last-named task in Meek's statement,—and as setting a brilliant example for future writers. It is indeed the first book to come fully to grips with the question: what are the "ultimate implications" of archaeological discoveries for the study of the Bible? There are few men as well qualified for this undertaking as Professor Burrows. He spent two years in the Near East in 1930-32, the second as Director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. During this time he came into contact with all the important expeditions in Palestine and was director of a small excavation on the school property. Since 1934 he has been President of the American Schools of Oriental Research and for several years Professor of Biblical Theology in Yale University. In addition to having a full knowledge of archaeological discoveries he has the further advantage of being well acquainted with both the Old and New Testaments. Unlike some field archaeologists and most romanticists who write on archaeology, he grinds no axes, but is possessed of unusually keen and cautious judgment.

This book has six chapters and a total of 59 illustrations. The first chapter is devoted to general consideration of the relationship between revelation and history; the purpose, technique, and materials of archaeology; and the interpretation of archaeological evidence. In the last, great emphasis is laid upon the distinction between *fact* and *interpretation* in dealing with evidence.

The second chapter considers the importance of archaeological finds for "Text and Languages" of the Bible. Distinction between literary and archaeological-literary materials, and between the work of the philologist and that of the archaeologist, is difficult to maintain in discussion of this subject, but several examples are given of the way in which archaeology has contributed to the establishment of the correct text of the Bible (lower criticism) and to the understanding of the meaning of words and phrases in the original languages.

The third chapter is devoted to "General Orientation." After a brief discussion of topography and chronology, the author gives a sketch of the political and cultural background of the Bible in the light of archaeology, classifying the material by archaeological eras, from the Bronze Age to the Roman Period.

The fourth and fifth chapters have appealed to this reviewer as the most valuable part of this work. They discuss the "Material and Secular Background" and the "Religious and Ethical Background." Here are brought together materials from many excavations which bear upon many subjects: in chapter IV on houses, fortifications, weapons and tools, pottery, economic life, education, the arts, etc.; and in chapter V on temples, sacred objects, deities, mythology, rites and institutions, burial and the hereafter, and social and moral ideals. No other book in English succeeds so well in bringing together things which belong together. The task performed in these two chapters and the one preceding is similar to that done by Watzinger in *Denkmäler Palästinas* (2 vols., 1933-35), using a somewhat different arrangement of the material. Burrows' book is, of course, more up-to-date than Watzinger's. Anyone who will work carefully through these three chapters, with some reference to original sources, will greatly increase his knowledge of Biblical archaeology.

The last chapter is given over to summing up the significance of archaeology for Biblical studies. The old question as to whether archaeology confirms the Bible is frankly dealt with. Two kinds of confirmation are distinguished—general and specific. As to the first, the conclusion is: "The picture fits the frame; the melody and the accompaniment are harmonious" (p. 278). Or, as stated on p. 1, "On the whole . . . archaeological work has unquestionably strengthened confidence in the reliability of the Scriptural record." As for the question of specific confirmation, the answer is different. In many details archaeology undoubtedly confirms or agrees with the Biblical accounts. In some others it disproves or corrects the Bible. For example, we cannot believe that there were Philistines in Palestine in the patriarchal period, as Gen. 21 and 26 indicate. Also, it is not true that Babylon was conquered by "Darius the Mede," as Daniel 5:31 says. Regarding the date and circumstances of the conquest of the Promised Land, to which an extended discussion is devoted, Burrows arrives at the conclusion that "any solution of the problem which does not do violence to the archaeological evidence must presuppose some unhistorical element in the Biblical account as we have it, while on the other hand to doubt that there was

any historical basis for the story is quite unjustified" (p. 273).

A few examples of the negative value of archaeology should not blind one to its very great positive contributions. These lie not so much in confirming Scripture as in explaining, supplementing, illustrating, and illuminating it. In a word, "the spiritual message of the Bible is conveyed in the vessels of ancient Oriental thought and life, and to understand the essential ideas we must understand that thought and that life" (p. 290).

This book can be used with great profit by teachers of the Bible in their own study and for supplementary reading by their students in various types of Biblical courses. It could be used as a textbook in a course in Biblical Archaeology if supplemented by frequent use of primary sources. For this reason, it is to be regretted that more reference is not made to the primary sources, and it is to be hoped that these will be included in future editions. The book also should be recommended to laymen and to workers in religious education (such as Sunday School teachers) as a good antidote to the romantic and irresponsible books on archaeology which have been published in too great quantity.

J. PHILIP HYATT

*Vanderbilt University  
School of Religion*

### Are You Now Unemployed or Seeking to re-Locate ?

If so you will do well to communicate as soon as possible with the chairman of the Committee on Vacancies: Ivan G. Grimshaw, American-International College, Springfield, Mass.

Again this year this committee is planning to send to the deans of all colleges offering courses in Bible and Religion a list of the people enrolled with the committee giving a brief statement of their qualifications. (No actual names will appear; key numbers being used). In case of a vacancy those qualified will be informed immediately.

A note to Dr. Grimshaw will bring you a registration blank by return mail, and insure inclusion of your record. Those enrolled for 1941 may enroll for 1942 by merely forwarding 25c in one cent stamps to Dr. Grimshaw and indicating any additions to be made to their 1941 registration blank. All those enrolled for 1942 will appear in the Personnel Exchange column in the next issue of the *Journal*.

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# THE ASSOCIATION

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## The Annual Meeting

The thirty-second meeting of the National Association of Biblical Instructors convened at 4:00 P. M., December 28th, 1941, in the Social Room of Union Theological Seminary. The session was called to order by President Paton.

Professor Newman was introduced as recording secretary of the Association, having served by request of the Nominating Committee since the resignation last spring of Dr. Huntress.

The treasurer's report was given by Professor Mould and copies of it were distributed. The report on membership was included in the treasurer's report and showed a slight increase over 1940. An auditing committee composed of Professors Dwight M. Beck and John P. Deane was chosen. This committee, after carefully examining the treasurer's accounts, reported them in proper and commendable form.

Other reports called for were those from the corresponding secretary and the committee on Vacancies and Appointments. The former reported the sale during 1941 of 233 copies of the *Unit of Bible Study*. The report of Dr. Grimshaw was read by the secretary and forwarded to the editor of the *Journal*.

Other business was postponed to the next day to provide sufficient time for the President's address on "New Occasions, New Duties," by Mrs. Katherine Hazeltine Paton.

Among the delightful innovations this year was the social hour and buffet supper served in the Social Room. This supper was a special convenience inasmuch as the Seminary Refectory was not to be opened until Monday noon, December 29th.

The Association welcomed as guests at the supper and the evening session the revisers of the proposed English Bible. Dean Weigle traced the development of English translations of the Bible, showing the desirability of the English and American Revisions being replaced by a new revision now in process. He described the composition and procedure of the present committee of 16.

Dr. James Moffatt spoke on "Some Outstanding Problems of the Revisers." He read parallel passages of the new with older versions to illustrate the contribution of the revision committee. The announcement was made that the whole New Testament would be finished by 1945, but that the

Old Testament would be available at a later date. One of the chief problems was clearly seen to be that of the use of quotation marks.

The Association regretted the absence of Dr. Cadbury because of sickness. His paper on "Noteworthy Rejected Readings" will, no doubt, be printed in a later issue of the *Journal*.

The symposium Monday morning in the Social Room was integrated about the theme, "The Bearing of the Nature of Christianity on the Teaching of Religion." Dr. Edgar S. Brightman of Boston University spoke on "Christianity, Philosophy and the Teaching of Religion" with his thesis being that philosophy is essential to the teaching of religion in college. Dr. Harrison Elliott of Union Theological Seminary in his discussion of "The Implication of the Functional Approach" took the position that the Bible must be taught as the record of experience or the interpretation of experience. Finally, "The Historical Element in Christianity" was treated by Dr. Walter Horton of Oberlin. His address was followed by a discussion of the entire symposium.

The afternoon session was rather varied. The Association was called together in the Social Room to hear Vice-President Hyatt's paper on "The Ras Shamra Discoveries and the Interpretation of the Old Testament."

The Association then adjourned to join with the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis in listening to the Presidential address of Dr. Julius Morgenstern after which the session of the National Association of Biblical Instructors was continued in Room 205. Two helpful papers followed—"The Total Responsibility of a College Teacher of Religion" by Dr. Thomas S. Kepler of Lawrence College, and "College Courses in Religion" by Professor Paul E. Johnson of the Boston Graduate School of Theology. The latter was read in Dr. Johnson's absence by Dr. Elmer A. Leslie of the same institution.

The closing business meeting followed. Professor Purinton's absence was noted with regret. His brief letter saying that the *Journal* was its own report was accepted as the Editor's report. The Association voted to express its appreciation to the editor for the high type of *Journal* maintained for 1941.

A budget was presented by Dr. Mould as the recommendation of the Council for 1942.



## BUDGET FOR 1942

Printing and Distributing Journal of Bible and Religion .....	\$1,300.00
Editors' expenses .....	180.00
Treasurer's expenses .....	100.00
Annual Meeting .....	40.00
Miscellaneous general expense .....	25.00
Promotion .....	50.00
Midwestern Branch .....	45.00
Permanent bank balance .....	100.00
Annual meeting balance as reserve for accounts payable .....	370.00
	<hr/>
	\$2,210.00

This budget was accepted.

The nominating committee presented the following list of officers for next year:

President: Professor Edgar S. Brightman, Boston University.
Vice-President: Professor Muriel S. Curtis, Wellesley College.
Treasurer: Professor Elmer K. Mould, Elmira College.
Recording Secretary: Professor Herbert L. Newman, Colby College.
Corresponding Secretary: Miss Narola Rivenburg, Baptist Institute, Philadelphia.
Chairman of the Program Committee: Professor Dwight M. Beck, Syracuse University.
Associates in Council:
Dean Frank G. Lankard, Brothers College, 1942.
Professor Floyd V. Filson, Presbyterian Theological Seminary, 1942 and 1943.
Professor Florence B. Lovell, Vassar College, 1942-1944.

The secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for the whole slate.

Professor Williams presented a proposal for consideration by the Association regarding a revision of procedure in the case of theological students in both undergraduate and seminary studies. It was voted to refer this to the Council for 1942.

It was voted that the new Council be instructed by the recording secretary regarding new items to be considered in 1942.

A vote was taken to send greetings to the midwestern branch of the National Association of Biblical Instructors at its January meeting. Dr. Carl Purinton was appointed by the President to represent the Association.

Professor Mould presented the recommendation of the Council that a membership committee be

created for the year 1942 with the recording secretary as chairman and members chosen from different areas. This was voted.

The Association voted to express its appreciation to Union Theological Seminary for the Social Room, the buffet supper, and for all the accommodations enjoyed by the members.

A hearty vote of thanks was extended to Dr. Clarence T. Craig for the excellent program provided for the annual meeting.

After the Monday evening session, which was a joint-meeting with the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis and the American Schools of Oriental Research, the Association adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

HERBERT L. NEWMAN,  
Recording Secretary.

## Treasurer's Report for the Year 1941

## RECEIPTS

Balance reported at annual meeting, 27 December 1940 .....	\$498.53
Dues: Arrears for 1940* .....	15.75
Current for 1941* .....	300.80
Advance for 1942* .....	17.25
Subscriptions to Journal of Bible and Religion:	
Arrears for 1940* .....	47.25
Current for 1941* .....	1,018.12
Advance for 1942* .....	92.25
Advertising in Journal of Bible and Religion .....	186.50
Sale of literature .....	61.70
Miscellaneous commissions on JBR subscriptions .....	3.90
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	\$2,242.05

## DISBURSEMENTS

Printing and distributing Journal of Bible and Religion .....	\$1,238.18
Editors' expenses, Journal of Bible and Religion .....	137.61
Treasurer's expenses .....	64.54
Annual meeting .....	19.43
Midwestern Branch .....	13.14
1940 accounts: Printing programs and dues bills .....	13.50
Somerset Press for JBR viii/4 .....	260.00
Association letterheads .....	4.90
Committee on vacancies, expenses .....	20.00
BALANCE IN ELMIRA BANK AND TRUST COMPANY .....	470.75
	<hr/>
	\$2,242.05

## ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

On deposit, Post Office, Somerville, N. J. ....	\$ 7.23
Macfarland and Heaton, Advertising representatives .....	23.42

## MEMBERSHIP

Members paid for 1942 .....	22
Members paid for 1941 .....	424
Members in arrears for 1941 .....	43
Honorary members .....	1
New members enrolled and paid during 1941 .....	50
Restored from suspended roll during 1941 .....	5
Members dropped during 1941	
By reason of death .....	1
At their own request various reasons.	22
For non-payment of dues for 1940....	30
Libraries and institutions paid for 1942 (JBR) .....	16
Libraries and institutions paid for 1941 (JBR) .....	39

## MEMBER DECEASED

Rev. Wm. Henry Jones, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, N. H.
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## Report of the Chairman of the Committee On Vacancies N. A. B. I.

The past year has been one of activity for your Committee on Vacancies. There has been very satisfactory planting and nurturing even though the harvest may not seem too plenteous. The following statistics will help to make clear things which may appear veiled in the foregoing sentences.

Twenty-eight people were enrolled with this committee throughout the year, 1941. Twenty-three were men, and five women. In the matter of training they represented, among the men, 12 who had Ph.D. degrees or the equivalent, 5 who were working on the Ph. D. with the hope of securing that degree during the year, 5 who held master of arts degree or its equivalent, and one who held the B. D. degree. Of the women, 5 held the Ph. D., and 2 the M. A.

A list of those enrolled appeared in the February issue of the *Journal*, and supplements to this

list were published in the succeeding issues. In the middle of April mimeographed copies of this list were sent to the deans of more than 300 colleges offering courses in Bible and/or religion.

The effectiveness of the key letter used in place of the person's name was attested by the fact that one college president losing a faculty member and seeking to replace that person wrote for information concerning two people, designating them by code letter. One person so designated was the individual leaving the position.

During the year inquiries came from the presidents of seven colleges asking for information concerning from one to seven persons recorded on our mimeographed list. These inquiries on post cards, in letters, special delivery letters, and telegrams, were from colleges and universities in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Massachusetts, North Carolina and California.

There has been some suggestion that it might be well to limit enrollment with the committee to those holding the Ph. D. or its equivalent since this degree is practically essential to one who desires a position teaching biblical subjects on the college level. However, a study of the 15 people inquired about revealed that four held only the M. A. degree and one the B. D. degree, and of the first four, two were inquired about twice. All of which would seem to indicate that we would do well to continue to allow any member of N. A. B. I. to enroll.

Strange as it may seem, unless your chairman scans college alumni publications carefully, it is difficult to know when enrollees are placed. For unless he hears directly from the college accepting a man he must depend upon other sources of information, for the person placed seems not interested in letting this committee know of his success. Whether placed through the activities of the committee, through personal effort, or through the efforts of friends, each person enrolled should take it upon himself to keep the committee informed of his status.

In conclusion, as chairman I state again as in past years, that while convinced of the validity of the thing which we are trying to do, and feeling that its effectiveness cannot be called into question, that effectiveness will be in direct proportion to the interest displayed by all members of N. A. B. I. This committee stands ready to coordinate your efforts at cooperation. Remember you may some day be "the man seeking a new or a better job."

IVAN GEROULD GRIMSHAW, *Chairman*  
Committee on Vacancies (N.A.B.I.).